THE OLD TIME COLLEGE PRESIDENT

GEORGE P. SCHMIDT

Here is presented a type of great influence in the history of American culture. With the old-time college president we see the educational frontier of the country advance from Massachusetts to the Mississippi. We watch him in his task of instructing and disciplining the future leaders of the nation; we see him weigh—and usually reject—pedagogic innovations; we accompany him into the battles of the churches, the conflicts between reformers and vested interests, the struggles of the nationalists and particularists of his time. He had views on everything and to a large extent imposed them upon his generation.

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By GEORGE P. SCHMIDT

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BY

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Concordia College, Ft. Wayne

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To
MY MOTHER

PREFACE

This study is the outgrowth of a term paper, which was prepared by the writer for the seminar in American social and cultural history conducted by Professor Dixon Ryan Fox of the History Department of Columbia University. Under the latter's guidance and with the aid of his interest and encouragement the book assumed its present proportions. Next to Professor Fox, the writer is indebted to Professor Evarts B. Greene of the History Department of Columbia University for his examination of the entire manuscript and his invaluable suggestions. Others who read the manuscript or portions of it and made helpful comments are Professor Herbert Schneider of the Philosophy Department of Columbia University, Professor Edward H. Reisner of Teachers' College, and Professor Edgar W. Knight of the University of North Carolina. Their aid, too, is gratefully acknowledged. For errors and shortcomings the writer alone is responsible.

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INTRODUCTION

An examination of conditions in American colleges before 1860 reveals the fact that in nearly all of them the most important person of the establishment was the president. He was the balance wheel upon whose steadiness depended the smooth functioning of the entire mechanism. If education is largely a matter of human contacts, then the president was by all odds the greatest single educative force encountered by the students. For the early nineteenth-century colleges were no universities, with complicated organizations, and a wide gulf fixed between the administrative apex and the newly-enrolled freshman. The early American college president was not a half-mythical personality, an intellectual and moral force in whose existence the undergraduate believed but whom, like Santa Claus, he never expected to see in the flesh. The old time college president was a very real presence. As head disciplinarian in a boarding school his influence was direct and immediate. He lectured and heard recitations, almost invariably in the senior class, and often in the lower classes as well. Controversial subjects such as ethics, metaphysics and political economy were his field of instruction. Here his opportunities for shaping opinions and molding character were almost unlimited, and many a president utilized them to the utmost. In short, the president, nearly everywhere important, was in most institutions the dominating influence.

The college president, then, is the subject of this study. No attempt has been made to give complete detailed biographies of any of the men, not even the greatest. Natur-

ally there are outstanding leaders who come in for a larger share of attention than the rest, but the purpose throughout has been to include many representative figures, so that a composite picture might emerge that would be trustworthy and accurate. At the same time exceptional individuals that fit no mold have not been neglected. Such characters receive their due measure of attention not only because the temptation is always present to deal with original and interesting people more fully than their significance in a type-study warrants, but also because misleading generalizations are thereby avoided.

On the other hand this is not a systematic history of higher education in the United States. The fortunes of individual colleges are followed only insofar as they form a necessary background for the activities of their presidents. Problems of administration and finance, of curriculum and discipline, are introduced because they are the raw stuff which the president fashioned into the material and spiritual values of civilization. What was the nature of the office that this man filled? What was his heritage? His training for the work? How did he rate as an educator? An administrator? A scholar? To what extent did his activities as a minister and in politics help or hinder him in his work? These are some of the questions with which the present study deals.

The investigation covers the century between 1760 and 1860. Colonial backgrounds are considered, but only as backgrounds. It is the early national period, before the Civil War, that receives the greatest amount of attention. Between 1746 and 1769 six colleges were added to the original three in the colonies; before the Revolution began they were well under way and the national period of higher education can be said to have begun. From this time on a fairly continuous development may be traced, without any sharp breaks, until

1860 and after. In the statistics and tabulations upon which many of the conclusions are based, such institutions only are included as were in active operation as colleges by 1840. An attempt has been made to gather a fairly complete set of data about the presidents who were inducted into office in these colleges prior to 1860. Here again only those men are considered who were duly elected and who functioned for a year or longer. Presidents *pro tem.* and elected candidates who died or resigned before they could make their influence felt, have been ignored.

For several reasons the year 1860 has seemed a convenient terminus. Further extension might have led to diffuseness and unnecessary bulk, without adding much pertinent information or strengthening the validity of any conclusions. Then, too, the decade of the sixties marks the dawn of a new era, for it witnessed a number of new departures that were destined to change materially the aspect of higher education in the United States. In 1862 Congress passed the Morrill Act; in 1869 President Eliot took charge at Harvard; in 1876 Johns Hopkins opened its doors. This was the time of the rise of the public high school, with courses designed to prepare for the state university. Before 1860 the college dominated the field; but after that date it was forced to compete in ever-increasing measure with the growing universities and professional schools. The *ante-bellum* period is therefore, properly speaking, the era of the old time college and its president.

In reconstructing the college executive, caution was necessary in the use of the sources. Much of the information about the presidents comes from their former students and is colored by sentiment and prejudice. Memorial addresses and filiopietistic memoirs usually flatter their subjects, while adverse criticism by this or that alumnus may be based solely upon a personal encounter in undergraduate days. With due allow-

ance for such factors, the aim has been throughout to portray these men as they lived and moved in their environment. It is unhistorical to erect pedestals that are not deserved; it is equally unhistorical to belittle, with amused cynicism, the achievements of men who exerted a real and permanent influence upon their generation.

CHAPTER I

The Scene of Action

The American college has been called a native product. Native it is, like many of our institutions, only insofar as it is a European growth transplanted to America. Here, under pressure of a new environment, it changed almost beyond recognition, so that it now appears as a genuine product of the soil. But America did not produce it. The college is not the creation of any American educator or group of educators who resolved, after mature deliberation, to establish a four years' course in languages, science and philosophy as the crowning feature of their school system, and to call this a college. On the contrary, the college was brought over from England by the first generation of settlers, along with their axes and Bibles; it became a part of American life and was soon taken for granted. The educational writings of college presidents, previous to 1860 at any rate, were largely defenses of an establishment which they found ready to hand, which had apparently always been there, and whose very permanence argued for its worth. Their most perplexing problems rose out of the necessity not of vindicating the college as such, but of adjusting this ready-made institution, or being adjusted with it, to the immediate needs of their environment. The old college president found himself in charge of an institution which was rapidly becoming American, but which had its roots deep in the past.

Its immediate forebears were the colleges that made up

the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Beyond these it is not necessary to trace the origin. The corporate or collegiate form of organization as developed by wandering scholars, collegiate churches or medieval guilds, while it strikingly illustrates the continuity of history, has no place in the present discussion. Whatever the origins, there existed in each of the two university towns of England by the middle of the sixteenth century a number of organized bodies of students, who lived in a common dormitory, ate at a common table, worshiped together in their own chapel, and were governed by masters according to a definite set of rules. These were the colleges, and they exist to this day. When, in the seventeenth century, the graduates of these Oxford and Cambridge colleges who had found their way into the new world reached a point of development at which they could turn from the immediate problems of food and shelter to that of higher education they established schools that resembled, as nearly as circumstances would permit, the institutions they had known at home. They built colleges, the type of educational organization with which they were most familiar. It was impossible, however, to transplant the whole university system; conditions were not ripe for that. One college was all that a colonial community could support for the time being. The higher synthesis of a university, by means of lectures and researches in which all the colleges shared, was therefore not even attempted. In course of time this situation crystallized, the makeshift was raised into a standard, and so it happened that the college, in England a component part of the university, became in America an institution existing of and for itself.[1]

The process of Americanization is well illustrated by the

[1] A comprehensive discussion of the origins of the American college is found in Paul Monroe, *Cyclopedia of Education*, vol. i, article: "College, American".

history of the oldest of the colleges, Harvard. Chartered in 1636, it was modeled after Emanuel, the Puritan college at Cambridge, of which most of the founders of Harvard, as well as its first two presidents, had been members.[1] Its curriculum was that of Cambridge, adapted to local conditions. The college movement, begun with the founding of Harvard, continued, slowly at first, then at an ever accelerated pace, until by 1850 the almanacs listed one hundred and twenty such establishments.[2] By far the greater number were founded in the national period, after 1776; for when the Declaration of Independence was signed there were only nine. Half a century after Harvard the College of William and Mary had been founded at Williamsburg, in Virginia. Projected as early as 1619,[3] but thwarted by the indifference and opposition of the home authorities, it did not become a reality until 1693. A little later, at the turn of the century, a group of enterprising pastors secured a charter for a collegiate establishment at Saybrook, in Connecticut, and Yale, the third American college, came into being. Forty-five years passed before any schools were added to the first three. Then there were three again in close succession, all in the middle colonies: the College of New Jersey at Princeton, chartered in 1746, King's College in New York City, in 1754, and the College of Philadelphia, which had been an academy and obtained its collegiate charter in 1755. Shortly before the outbreak of the Revolution came the last trio of colonial colleges: the College of Rhode Island in 1765, Queen's College in New Jersey in 1766, and Dartmouth College in New Hampshire in 1769. All nine of the colonial colleges still exist, but not all under the same names. King's

[1] J. H. Gardiner, *Harvard*, pp. 3, 8 and *passim*; *cf.* also Monroe, *loc. cit.*

[2] *The American Almanac and Repository of Useful Knowledge for 1850.*

[3] H. B. Adams, "The College of William and Mary", in *U. S. Bureau of Education Circular of Information No. 1, 1887.*

has become Columbia, Queen's is Rutgers, the College of Philadelphia is the University of Pennsylvania, the College of New Jersey and the College of Rhode Island are Princeton and Brown, respectively.[1]

While each of these schools, since it was the product of peculiar local conditions, possessed an individuality all its own, yet the nine had much in common. All were being conducted under religious auspices.[2] Though not as a rule owned or directly controlled by church bodies, yet the maintenance and propagation of Christian doctrine was avowedly a chief purpose of their existence. Since it was believed that such a purpose could best be accomplished by an educated clergy, the training of ministers became a principal concern of the colleges. Every denomination felt the need of a training school for its future pastors and missionaries, and as the sects multiplied in number, the colleges did likewise. Harvard and especially Yale served the needs of the New England churches, William and Mary and Columbia were considered Anglican, Princeton was the institution of the Scotch Presbyterians, Rutgers was founded by the Dutch Reformed church, and Brown represented an attempt of the Baptists to secure educated native ministers. The dread of an illiterate clergy, mentioned as a principal reason for the founding of Harvard,[3] apparently filled the sponsors of the other

[1] Since the dates of foundation for each of the colleges mentioned in this chapter can be secured from the *Education Directory* of the U. S. Bureau of Education, and verified by comparison with statements in their respective catalogs or in college histories, references to authorities for the founding of the individual colleges have been omitted in this chapter.

[2] The College of Philadelphia might be considered an exception, since its board was dominated by laymen and no theological purpose was apparent, but even this school chose a prominent clergyman as its first president and modeled its curriculum along the lines he suggested. H. M. Lippincott, *The University of Pennsylvania, Franklin's College* (Philadelphia, 1919), p. 79 and *passim*.

[3] The well-known passage from *New England's First Fruits*, now inscribed in a tablet on the Johnston Gate on the Harvard campus.

colleges as well, for the thought is expressed again and again. William and Mary according to its charter of 1693 had a threefold aim. It was to furnish the church in Virginia with "a seminary of Ministers of the Gospel", to educate the youth in good manners, and to propagate the Christian faith among the Indians "to the glory of almighty God".[1] Yale was dedicated to the task of "upholding and Propagating of the Christian Protestant Religion".[2]

No doubt the training of ministers was an important function of the early colleges and so continued well into the nineteenth century. But it was not their only, perhaps not even their main function. From statements like those above it has sometimes been concluded that the colleges were theological seminaries, erected and fostered for the sole purpose of training ministers. A number of facts however militate against this extreme view. The charters themselves do not bear it out, for while phrases like those quoted do occur, they do not tell the whole story. Objectives of a more general nature are often mentioneed, which tend to give the institutions a much wider scope than that of mere theological training schools. The threefold objective of William and Mary has been noted. The Yale charter, after safeguarding "the Christian Protestant Religion", goes on to speak of instruction in the arts and sciences so that the students "may be fitted for Publick employment both in Church and Civil State".[3] Proficiency in the learned languages and the liberal arts and sciences were objectives at Princeton; the ministry as such is not mentioned at all.[4] In his "Advertise-

[1] General Catalogue, 1660-1874. *Cf.* also Isaac Sharpless, *The American College* (New York, 1915), p. 9.

[2] Charter of 1701, in F. B. Dexter, *Documentary History of Yale University* (New Haven, Conn., 1916), p. 3.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] V. L. Collins, *Princeton* (New York, 1914), p. 26 and *passim.*

ment" announcing the opening of Columbia, Samuel Johnson, the first president, mentions as the chief aim the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ, virtuous habits, and useful knowledge, that "may render them [the students] creditable to their Families and Friends, Ornaments to their Country and useful to the public Weal in their Generations." [1] And in Franklin's College of Philadelphia the theological motive was absent altogether. Its sponsors were interested with Franklin in what was "most useful" and "most ornamental".[2]

Statistics tend to show that these more general aims mentioned in the college charters were fairly well attained, and that the ministry was by no means the goal of the great majority of students. Of the 478 who graduated at Princeton during the administration of President Witherspoon, 1769-1794, only 114, or twenty-three per cent, entered the ministry, while the same group of students furnished one president of the United States, one vice-president, ten cabinet officers, six members of the Continental Congress, twenty-one United States senators, thirty-nine representatives, three justices of the Supreme Court, twelve state governors, and fifty-six members of state legislatures.[3] Compilations made in 1850 show that of all the graduates of Yale, Harvard and Dartmouth up to that time only about twenty-five per cent in each case had become ministers.[4] Equally significant are the figures at Brown, of 1826. At that time only sixty-eight of 1085 graduates had become Baptist ministers, over against

[1] Samuel Johnson, "Advertisement of King's College," in *Charters, Acts of the Legislature, Official Documents and Records* (John B. Pine, compiler, N. Y., 1920), p. 32.

[2] Franklin quoted in Lippincott, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

[3] V. L. Collins, *President Witherspoon* (Princeton, N. J., 1925), vol. ii, pp. 222, 229.

[4] *The American Almanac for 1850.*

151 Congregational ministers, and a scattered few of other denominations.[1]

Results such as these can be better understood after a glance at the following provision in Brown's charter: "Into this Liberal and Catholic Institution shall never be admitted any Religious Tests. . . . Youths of all Religious Denominations shall and may be freely admitted to the Equal Advantages, Emoluments and Honors of the College or University".[2] Not only members of all Protestant denominations, but Quakers and Jews were admitted here. While going to greater lengths in religious tolerance than some of the others, Brown was by no means unique in this respect. For the achievement of similar ends the Board of Governors of Columbia included an Anglican, a Dutch Reformed, a Presbyterian, a Lutheran, and a French (Huguenot) minister in its membership.[3] Like practices were in vogue elsewhere. Discrimination against students because of doctrinal differences seems to have been extremely rare, if it existed at all. By express provision or tacit consent the undenominational character of the student-body was everywhere recognized.[4]

The general resemblance observed in aim and policy extended also to the curriculum. There was little differentiation of courses before the Revolution. Electives were unheard of; the curriculum was fixed and the same for all. At Yale and at Dartmouth, at Princeton and at Brown, the future ministers, doctors and lawyers recited in Latin and

[1] *The Sesquicentennial of Brown University* (Providence, R. I., 1915), p. 173.

[2] Charter of Brown, quoted *ibid.*, frontispiece.

[3] Charter of Oct. 31, 1754. Given in *General Catalogue*.

[4] Catholics suffered under legal disabilities virtually everywhere in British America.

Greek, rhetoric, mathematics, logic and moral philosophy.[1] It was the eighteenth-century version of the *trivium* and *quadrivium,* the arts course of the medieval universities, which had originally been preparatory to the professional studies, but which, in the English colleges at least, had since the Renaissance become an end in itself. Transplanted bodily to Harvard and to William and Mary, it became the standard in all the colleges, though naturally in more or less diluted form. Minor differences only emphasized the essential sameness of the course, whose completion was required, because of its supposed cultural values, not only of students having the ministry in view, but of every aspirant to a higher education. Thus equipped, the college graduate was considered fit to conduct himself with dignity in any calling. It seems then that the colonial college, at least in its later stages, was intended not so much to train men to be ministers as to train ministers—and others—to be men.[2] Though he might have expressed it in other terms, the pre-Revolutionary college president's ideal of achievement did not differ materially from that proposed by a president of Columbia many years later: "Here in college is to be fashioned, in the highest attainable perfection, the scholar, the citizen, the good man, the Christian gentleman." [3]

The colleges emerged from the Revolution poor in purse and low in morale. The wear and tear of seven years of fighting had been severe, especially in those schools that were located within reach of the marching armies. Nassau Hall in Princeton, for instance, which had served at various times as a hospital and a barracks, and had repeatedly been

[1] L. F. Snow, *The College Curriculum in the United States* (1907), *passim.*

[2] President Meiklejohn so expressed it in an address, in *The American College* (New York, 1915).

[3] President King's address in *Addresses at the Inauguration of Mr. Charles King as President of Columbia College, New York* (N. Y., 1849).

a target for the cannon of the contending armies, was almost a complete ruin.[1] But with the coming of peace and the establishment of a sound government optimism returned, and gradually the existing institutions were rehabilitated, while new ones were added to them. The process was accelerated by the changed political situation, which released a powerful new motive. Patriotism and national pride were now advanced as urgent reasons for building more schools of higher learning and for bolstering up the old.[2] With the winning of independence, America had taken her place among the nations of the world, and it behooved her to prove to the world that she was capable of carrying her new dignity. Political freedom would be much more worth while if reinforced by intellectual independence. Europe must be shown that it had no monopoly of brains, and what could be a more fitting reply to European sneers and aspersions than a galaxy of American scholars, trained in American colleges by American teachers? Even more effective was the argument that higher education was needed as a safeguard to republican institutions. In a land where the government was based upon the consent of the governed it was not only desirable but essential that at least some of the governed possess a liberal education. An illiterate or half-educated people could not operate such a government successfully. Without the intelligent cooperation of the ruling classes the experiment was doomed to failure. True patriotism therefore demanded that more colleges be erected. As expressed a few years later by President Lindsley of Nashville University: "A free government like ours, can not be maintained except by an enlightened and virtuous people." [3]

[1] Collins, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, ch. ii, *passim.*

[2] For the various plans of national education suggested at this time *cf.* A. O. Hansen, *Liberalism and American Education in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1926).

[3] *Inaugural Address* (Nashville, 1825).

Such ideas were given utterance at the founding of Dickinson and of Hampden-Sidney, both chartered in 1783, the year of the peace. The former, at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, closer to the frontier than any of the older schools except Dartmouth, was established to promote the welfare of the state and to help the nation's preeminence by propagating virtuous principles and liberal knowledge. So the charter says. When a new president was to be chosen at Dickinson in 1804, it was considered distinctly to the advantage of one of the candidates that he was "an American native, who would not sport with our National government and character at the expense of the interests of the college".[1] The college charter of Hampden-Sidney, an academy since 1776, contains the following significant paragraph:

> And that, in order to preserve in the minds of the students that sacred love and attachment they should ever bear to the principles of the present glorious Revolution, the greatest care and caution shall be used in electing such professors and masters, to the end that no person shall be so elected unless the uniform tenor of his conduct manifests to the world his sincere affection for the liberty and independence of the United States of America.[2]

Like sentiments were current among student-bodies. When Transylvania in Kentucky, one of the first colleges west of the Alleghenies, was considering a man for the presidency who was not a native, the students presented a petition asking that the old president be urged to remain. The new man, they feared, "bred in civil and religous intolerance,"

[1] Charles Nisbet, the first president, had been an extreme Federalist, and so outspoken in his conservative views as to be totally out of sympathy with the Republican trustees of Dickinson. His letters show this. *Cf.* also C. F. Himes, *A Sketch of Dickinson College* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1879), p. 50.

[2] Given in *Bureau of Education Circular Information No. 1, 1888.*

would not be able completely to conquer his prejudices, and was therefore not fit to teach in an American university, "where the students ought to imbibe . . . the purest principles of Republicanism." [1]

Hampden-Sidney and Dickinson, these two first fruits of independence, were quickly followed by others. Twenty-one institutions of college grade came into existence between 1783 and 1800; forty years later educational journals listed an even hundred.[2] In all this development the national motive was prominent, but not to the exclusion of the older religious element. On the contrary, it supplemented and strengthened the latter. State-controlled colleges were projected as early as 1785, but the state university as we know it today was not a factor of importance before 1825, when the University of Virginia opened its doors, and even then its influence grew but slowly. As in colonial days so in the early national period the bulk of the work, both of founding and managing the new schools, fell to the churches. In church educational activities, two main streams of development are discernible. One emerged from New England, the other from the Presbyterian strongholds of New Jersey and Pennsylvania; both flowed west. Never was the militant Christianity of the Calvinistic Protestant churches more clearly displayed than in this fight to retain their religious and cultural heritage amid the primitive and inhospitable environment of a newly settled country, where nature well-nigh forced man to live on bread alone and where success in life consisted of little more than keeping body and soul together.

New England first attended to its own frontiers. Williams College in western Massachusetts, founded in 1793, was made possible by the bequest of Colonel Ephraim Wil-

[1] Ms. Records of Transylvania University under date of Oct. 3, 1804.

[2] *The American Almanac for 1841.*

liams, who died in the French and Indian War. In Maine a group of ministers organized a school of higher learning, which was chartered by the Massachusetts legislature in the following year and named in honor of Governor Bowdoin, one of its benefactors. Encouraged by Timothy Dwight, another community, in the newly-formed state of Vermont, erected Middlebury College in 1800. Local patriotism led to the founding of Amherst, in the Connecticut valley, in 1820. A near neighbor of Williams—too near, in the opinion of Williams supporters—Amherst shared with the latter a long struggle for existence.

The Yankee did not lose his zeal for education when he moved west. New York, Ohio, Michigan and Illinois were soon dotted with New England colleges, milestones in the path of empire. By independent effort or in conjunction with other elements of the population groups of New England pioneers erected school after school. The first of the latter type was Union College, in Schenectady, the gateway to the Mohawk valley. The joint efforts of Congregational, Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed churches led to the founding of this institution in 1795.[1] As its name indicates, it was to be an all-Protestant college, no one denomination being permitted ever to secure a majority of the board of trustees. Strategically located at the starting-point of one of the most important roads to the west, and with a student body drawn from all sections of the country,[2] Union came to typify the new nationalism that was shaping American destinies. Farther up the Mohawk Valley Samuel Kirkland's missionary school for Indians expanded into Hamilton College in 1812. Beyond western New York,

[1] A. V. Raymond, *Union University* (New York, 1907), pp. 9, 37 and *passim*.

[2] C. Van Santvoord, *Memoirs of Eliphalet Nott* (New York, 1876), p. 148.

along the shore of Lake Erie, lay the old Connecticut Reserve, and here too the movement extended. Its inhabitants had scarcely emerged from primitive frontier conditions when they established Hudson College (now Western Reserve University) in 1826. Eight years later came Oberlin, that *antebellum* haven of idealism—or hotbed of radicalism —which was a bit of pure New England transplanted bodily to the forests of northern Ohio. The prime mover at Oberlin, the Rev. John J. Shipherd, went on to Michigan after he had seen his enterprise well under way, and there repeated the process by founding Olivet College.[1] But even before this the New England influence had penetrated to the heart of the Mississippi Valley, when members of the famous Yale Band, together with citizens of Jacksonville, founded the Illinois College in that town, in 1829.[2]

More extensive than the New England movement, at least in the number of schools established, was the Presbyterian. When the Scotch-Irish wave rolled down the Appalachian valleys into Virginia and the Carolinas, and broke through the mountains into Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee, it flooded the countryside with academies and colleges. Many of these owed their existence to the vision of a pioneer minister, for the Presbyterians, like their New England brethren, believed in an educated clergy. Most of the trail-blazers were from Princeton, which equally with Yale deserves the title of mother of colleges. Dickinson and Hampden-Sidney, already referred to, were the first of the Presbyterian establishments. Following the movement into western Pennsylvania, one finds Washington and Jefferson, two small institutions in neighboring towns, both founded in the first decade of the nineteenth century. A little later, in 1817, Allegheny be-

[1] D. L. Leonard, *The Story of Oberlin* (Boston, 1898), p. 21 and *passim.*

[2] E. Beecher and T. Baldwin, *An Appeal in Behalf of the Illinois College recently founded at Jacksonville, Ill.* (New York, 1831), *passim.*

gan operations in the northwestern part of the state. Here, as at Union, joint influences were at work; the first president was from New England, a Harvard man, but the constituency of the college was largely Scotch Presbyterian.[1] In the old Northwest Territory, Ohio University at Athens and Miami University at Oxford, Ohio, were among the pioneers. Dating from 1804 and 1809 respectively, they were the first schools to be established with the aid of Federal land grants.[2] Both were Presbyterian in complexion, the trustees of each quite naturally and consistently choosing Presbyterian ministers as presidents. As a result of the efforts of the Presbyterian clergy in Indiana, who wanted western boys for western missions, Hanover College was erected in 1833, to be followed a year later by Wabash. South of the Ohio the church had schools dating back to the eighteenth century. Blount and Greeneville, in eastern Tennessee, were both founded in 1794, and claim the distinction of being the oldest colleges west of the Alleghenies. The same decade saw the incorporation of Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky, a school that was to enjoy a brilliant—if unpresbyterian—era of achievement in the twenties, when Lexington came to be hailed as the Athens of the West. These and numerous others, all established in the first fifty years of American independence, stood out as monuments to the courage and foresight of this energetic church.

All these colleges have been somewhat indiscriminately listed as Presbyterian, but they were not in every case owned, financed and operated by the church as such. At times, as in the case of Davidson in North Carolina and Hanover in

[1] E. A. Smith, *Allegheny—A Century of Education* (Meadville, Pa., 1916), *passim.*

[2] F. W. Blackmar, "The History of Federal and State Aid to Higher Education in the United States", in *Bureau of Education Circular of Information No. 1, 1890.*

Indiana, local presbyteries exercised direct control. More often they were community enterprises, conducted for the benefit of all who could meet the entrance requirements, and governed by self-constituted and self-perpetuating boards of trustees. Denominational religious tests were usually ruled out in such institutions by express prohibitions in the charters, and all citizens were invited to contribute funds. But with Scotch Presbyterians forming the majority or at any rate the articulate majority of their constituencies, the colleges gravitated quite naturally into the control of that group, just as in New England a college, unless otherwise designated, was assumed to be Congregational. Any marked departure from the beliefs and practices of the majority on the part of college presidents or other officers might lead to their removal from office, not, so the trustees would argue, on religious grounds, but for the good democratic reason that a majority must have its way. A conspicuous victim of such a procedure was the distinguished Horace Holley, whose liberal views in a highly orthodox community made his position as head of Transylvania University untenable.[1]

Other denominations also recognized the potentialities of such indirect control, and the extent of the domination of higher education by the Presbyterians. John P. Durbin, a Methodist clergyman and educator, in 1831 urged upon his brethren the necessity of acquiring colleges of their own, in order that they, like the Presbyterians, might exert a cultural influence commensurate with their numbers. The latter, he maintained, because of their control of a "large majority" of American colleges, were producing an unusually large number of editors, authors, and teachers, and were to be found everywhere in positions of trust and authority. And this was but natural, for the colleges were training for leader-

[1] The incident is more fully discussed in a later chapter. *Cf.* R. and J. Peter, *Transylvania University* (Louisville, Ky., 1896), *passim.*

ship, and "the President of a superior college had it in his power to do more harm or good than the President of the United States." [1]

Close organic connection between church and school prevailed among Baptists and Methodists. The charter of Brown, the oldest Baptist institution in the country, secured a majority in the board of trustees for members of that denomination. Madison University, now Colgate, was the protegé of the Baptist Education Society of New York; Columbian, now George Washington, was founded in the national capital in 1821 by a "literary society" under Baptist auspices; Mercer University was established by the Georgia Baptist Convention; Illinois Baptists erected Shurtleff.[2] But in their case denominational control did not mean sectarian exclusiveness. Baptist schools were open to all; in fact, the principle of religious freedom was more emphatically asserted by colleges of this church than perhaps anywhere else. The explanation for both facts lies in Baptist history. The Baptist church in the late eighteenth century was by no means the large and powerful body it has since grown to be. A group of dissenters, whose history was one long struggle against hostile and disintegrating forces, it was but natural that they should jealously safeguard their corporate integrity by exercising close control over their institutions. At the same time their very existence had depended upon the recognition of the principle of toleration, and it would have been inconsistent to demand toleration for themselves while denying it to others.

Among the last of the Protestant bodies to enter the field of higher education were the Methodists. After the failure,

[1] Durbin's article appeared in the *Quarterly Register and Journal of the American Education Society*, vol. iv, no. 1.

[2] Historical statements in catalogs and *Bureau of Education Circular of Information No. 4, 1888.*

in 1795, of Cokesbury College in Maryland, to which Bishop Asbury had given the impetus,[1] no other institution was founded until the third decade of the nineteenth century. By that time Methodist leaders had come to realize the limitations of an untrained ministry, however devoted, and were beginning to make strenuous efforts to secure colleges of their own.[2] Augusta, Kentucky, in 1823, was the first. Four years later McKendree was established, the pioneer Methodist college in Illinois. Randolph-Macon in Virginia opened its doors in 1830, and in the following year Wesleyan, the first of the name, was chartered in Connecticut. Indiana Asbury, now DePauw, dates from 1837.

Not content with building new schools the Methodists adopted the practice of taking over existing institutions that, for one reason or another, had ceased to flourish. Thus Wesleyan opened its classes in the buildings of Captain Partridge's military academy, which the local conference had purchased. Dickinson and Allegheny changed hands in a similar manner, in 1833. The necessary legal and financial adjustments completed, these establishments with land, buildings and good will—such as it was—passed into the hands of the Methodist conferences.[3] Their growing numbers and their episcopal system of government gave them the strength to carry on such enterprises; by concentrating on a few colleges and enlisting whole conferences in their support the Methodists brought to these schools a larger and more harmonious constituency and gave them a new lease on life. At the same time they were in full control and took steps to assure the observance of Methodist principles and practices.

[1] Matthew Simpson, *A Hundred Years of Methodism* (New York, 1876), p. 253.

[2] Durbin, *loc. cit. Cf.* also *The Works of Stephen Olin* (2 vols., New York, 1852), vol. ii, p. 240.

[3] Himes, *op. cit.* and Smith, *op. cit., passim.*

At Dickinson and Allegheny Methodist ministers assumed the presidency, and the trustees of the latter announced after the change that while the school would continue non-sectarian, the students would be held to a closer observance of the Sabbath.[1] In a similar spirit the need for a college had been urged by some of the leaders of the church in Virginia, for of those available to their men, William and Mary was out of the question because of an " excess of worldliness and free-living ", while Hampden-Sidney was not safe in the long run because it inculcated Calvinistic views of predestination, which were quite out of harmony with the Arminian leanings of the Methodists.[2] Accordingly, they placed twenty-six members of their church upon the board of trustees of Randolph-Macon out of a total of thirty, and most of these were ministers.

Fewer in number, but at times of considerable local influence, were the colleges of the smaller religious bodies, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Quakers and others. The Episcopalians had suffered in prestige as a result of their stand during the Revolution, when most of their clergy had been loyalists, but through the untiring zeal of men like bishops Seabury, Hobart and Chase they were recovering some of their lost ground. Hobart was instrumental in establishing a theological seminary at Geneva, New York, to which a college department was added in 1825, the present Hobart College. In a like manner Kenyon College in Ohio, in 1827, was the result of the efforts of Bishop Chase, who collected money for it on both sides of the Atlantic. Earlier in the same decade, 1823, the Episcopalians of Connecticut had erected Washington, now Trinity, College.

The beginnings of Roman Catholic higher education go

[1] Smith, *op. cit.*, p 83.

[2] R. Irby, *History of Randolph-Macon College* (Richmond, Va., 1899), p. 9.

back to 1789 when, under the direction of Bishop Carroll, Georgetown University was founded with the object of providing " a pious and Catholic education of the young to insure their growing up in the faith ". In 1815, being then in the District of Columbia, Georgetown received a college charter from Congress. Other early Catholic establishments were St. Mary's in Baltimore, chartered in 1805, St. Joseph's in Bardstown, Kentucky, in 1824, St. Louis University in 1833, and Spring Hill in Alabama, in 1835. In all of these, with the exception of St. Mary's in Baltimore, instruction and administration were eventually committed to the Jesuits.

Designed primarily to serve the educational and religious needs of their own people, some of the Catholic colleges exerted an influence beyond the borders of the church. St. Mary's in Baltimore opened its doors to Protestants and Catholics alike and in 1806 boasted an enrollment of 106 college students of various creeds. Soon after its opening in 1822, Bishop England's classical seminary in Charleston, South Carolina, numbered sixty-three students, of whom fifty-one were non-Catholics. In a few years the total enrollment had risen to 130 and Protestant journals were beginning to warn their people against " the errors and deformities of Popery ".[1]

The Lutheran and Reformed population of eastern Pennsylvania were served by Franklin and Marshall College, a merger, whose component parts had existed since 1787 and 1836 respectively. At Gettysburg, where the Lutheran church had maintained a seminary since 1826—on Seminary Ridge, of Civil War fame—a college was added in 1832. Of some interest, because different in curriculum and government, is the educational system of the Lutheran Synod of

[1] F. P. Cassidy, *Catholic College Foundations and Development in the United States 1677-1850* (Catholic University Publication, Washington, D. C., 1924).

Missouri. Beginning with the log college in the wilderness, like so many others, its antecedents were neither English nor Scottish, but German. In 1839 a group of Saxon immigrants in southern Missouri established Concordia College, which was later moved successively to St. Louis and to Ft. Wayne, in Indiana. A synodical organization, effected in 1847, took over the college and in course of time added nine higher schools to the original one in Ft. Wayne. These institutions were modeled after the German *Gymnasium,* and retained something of its character well into the twentieth century, although the resemblance grew fainter and fainter. The schools in this system had no independent existence but were owned, governed and supported by the synod as such. Trustees were responsible to the general body and, together with presidents and faculties, were elected by means of machinery which that body provided. Among Protestant educational institutions this represents probably the extreme degree of centralized control.[1]

While the church and private institutions were receiving the support of most of the people interested in education, another form of higher school had come into existence and was growing in importance: the state college. The day of the state university as we know it was still in the future, but the institution existed and exercised some influence in the period under discussion. The demand for state-owned and tax-supported colleges and universities has been traced both to the spirit of national pride and responsibility that followed the winning of independence, and to the French influence, which was so strong at the time. It is pointed out that Jefferson modeled the University of Virginia along French lines, and that the elaborate system of public education proposed for the territory of Michigan was not English in its conception but

[1] *The Concordia Cyclopedia* (1927), as well as a synodical handbook and other data, are published by the book concern of this denomination in St. Louis.

French, or Continental. But non-denominational institutions for all the people existed before the founding of the Universities of Virginia and Michigan. The secular trend developed in colonial days and is first observable in the College of Philadelphia. Although conducted by a private corporation, this school lacked the religious tinge of other colleges and appealed to all shades of opinion. In keeping with Franklin's "Proposals relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania" of 1749, its aim was to teach the mother tongue, though without neglecting the classics, and in general to place greater emphasis on what was "most useful" and "most ornamental". Its course of study represents the first bit of independent curriculum-building in the colonial colleges. Business and professional men made up its first board of trustees; there was not a minister among them.[1]

Here was the first departure from the traditional church college. It was followed soon after the Revolution by others. The most pretentious attempt at a complete system of public higher education at this time was the organization of the University of the State of New York. In 1784 the legislature created an organization that was to include all the incorporated colleges and academies of the state. A governing body was also established, the Board of Regents, with power to inspect all the member institutions, to charter new ones, and to fix standards.[2]

Four additional schools deserve mention here, all nonsectarian in character and controlled by the government. Three of these were located in the South, where a virgin field welcomed them. For while in New England and the middle states the choicest fruits had been gathered by the private schools, there was, with the exception of William and Mary,

[1] Lippincott, *passim.*

[2] F. B. Hough, *Historical and Statistical Record of the University of the State of New York* (Albany, 1885), p. 5.

not a college worthy of the name south of the Potomac River. Education and improvement were in the air, for America now had a destinty to fulfill; and actuated by this spirit the states of Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina chartered state colleges or universities. Good order, the prosperity of society, and the encouragement of all useful learning were among the objects stressed by the founders. In North Carolina the support ended with a lottery and a land grant of doubtful value, but the other two voted annual subsidies of $8,000 and $6,000 respectively, and South Carolina added a lump sum of $50,000 for buildings. In New England, meanwhile, the newly-created state of Vermont had adopted a similar policy and chartered a university in 1791. After Vermont there were no more public foundations until 1820, when a state seminary struggled into being in Indiana. Then in 1825 Jefferson's long-cherished project was finally realized and the University of Virginia opened its doors.[1] It was Jefferson's desire that this school should be a real university, consisting of a number of professional schools whose students were to be college graduates.[2] Conditions however were not ripe for such an institution, and in execution the plan was somewhat curtailed. Alabama imitated the example of her southern sisters in 1831, to be followed later in the decade by Michigan, the last state to establish a university during this period. In Michigan an elaborate "catholepistemiad", with thirteen "didaxiae", had existed on paper since 1817, but it was twenty-four years before this dream sobered down to reality and the first students were received by the University of Michigan.[3]

[1] College histories furnished most of the above data. In view of the summarizing character of this introductory chapter, no detailed references have been given here.

[2] P. A. Bruce, *History of the University of Virginia*, 5 vols. (New York, 1920), vol. i, p. 332.

[3] E. M. Farrand, *History of the University of Michigan* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1885), *passim.*

The present survey has thus far covered the development of the American college before the year 1840. Several types have been found, which have been classified in a general way as church schools and state schools. Of the former the majority were controlled or at least influenced by the Congregational or the Presbyterian denomination. The remainder were largely Methodist or Baptist. The latter, the state colleges, were eight in number and located mainly in the South and West. Though convenient for purposes of classification, this distinction proves, on closer examination, more artificial than real, for there was no sharp line of division between the two types.[1] In the field of higher education the vaunted principle of the separation of church and state was very imperfectly observed. Each encroached upon the sphere of the other, or rather there was a twilight zone, a no man's land, in which the powers and duties of neither church nor state were clearly discernible. This two-fold jurisdiction, which was due to an identity of interest and which at times resulted in a conflict of authorities, was most apparent in the handling of finances. Public subsidies to privately-owned colleges were a common occurrence, the first recorded instance being that of the Massachusetts General Court in 1636, when it voted four hundred pounds " towards a schoale or colledge ".[2] Dartmouth received more than $35,000 all told from the government of New Hampshire. In New York the regents of the state university prescribed the curriculum and the endowment of private colleges, and in turn aided them with money grants; thus Union obtained a

[1] It should be noted here that the first three American colleges, Harvard, William and Mary, and Yale, though classed here as church institutions, were at the same time controlled by the governments of their respective colonies and at times figured prominently in provincial politics.

[2] Quincy, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 8. Harvard in colonial days was really a state institution.

total of $358,111 out of the state treasury. Pennsylvania repeatedly subsidized the University of Pennsylvania, Dickinson, Allegheny and other schools within its borders.[1] Sometimes the state grants were in cash, sometimes they were tracts of land, and again they might consist merely of the permission to conduct a lottery. But though private institutions might be assisted with public funds, the state's own colleges were frequently forced to turn to private individuals for support, for legislatures were tardy in recognizing their obligations toward their charges. North Carolina and Vermont suffered in this manner, each relying on private contributions for its continued existence.[2] The distinction between public and private establishments was further weakened by Federal land grants to states for educational purposes. Ohio and Miami universities in Ohio, Blount and Cumberland colleges in Tennessee benefited by such grants and were accordingly considered semi-public in character.[3] Every college finally, under whatever auspices it had been founded, could be legally conducted only within the limits of a charter which was granted by the state and which prescribed its duties and affirmed its privileges. The state took cognizance of and encouraged both types.

At times, to be sure, there was friction. On the frontier especially, where men had cut loose from religion along with other home ties, one finds occasional anti-clerical flareups, aggravated by the unedifying spectacle of inter-sectarian quarrels. In an attack upon Indiana College in 1829 it was charged that the president and faculty were Easterners and Presbyterians, and opposed to Andrew Jackson. Such men could not be loyal Hoosiers. The Methodists at the same time demanded a share of the professorships commensurate

[1] Figures from Blackmar, *op. cit., passim.*

[2] Historical statements in the catalogs.

[3] Blackmar. *Cf.* also the catalogs of those colleges.

with their denominational strength. The upshot of it all was the withdrawal of state financial support from the institution for a period of thirty years.[1] Illinois experienced a similar movement in the thirties. Here too several denominations clamored for recognition and support, and roused adverse public sentiment to such a degree that the chartering of their college was several times delayed. When the law incorporating four of these schools was finally enacted, in 1835, it forbade denominational religious instruction and the establishment of theological departments in all.[2] The character of the opposition which the friends of higher education had to face can be inferred from the challenging remark of an opponent of the charter in the lower house of the legislature, who asserted that he was " born in a brier thicket, rocked in a hog trough, and had never had his genius cramped by the pestilential air of a college ".[3]

More commonly, however, there was cooperation between state and church. In their aims and objectives, also, the institutions of each showed remarkable similarity. The advancement of Christ's kingdom, virtuous conduct, the encouragement of useful learning, the welfare of the government, the welfare of the people—these are phrases recurring everywhere in the charters. And though a Methodist college might stress Christ's kingdom, while the state institution was more likely to emphasize the public service, yet these aims were not antagonistic but supplementary. The means, too, of reaching this goal were everywhere the same. The course

[1] David D. Banta, *History of Indiana University* (*Indiana University 1820-1920 Centennial Memorial Volume*, Bloomington, Ind., 1921), p. 68 *et seq.*, p. 102.

[2] H. C. Rammelkamp, *Illinois College* (New Haven, 1928), p. 67. Charter in appendix. *Cf.* also T. C. Pease, *The Frontier State* (*The Centennial History of Illinois*, 5 vols., Springfield, Ill., 1918), p. 434.

[3] Rammelkamp, p. 65.

of study had been carried over from colonial days with but minor changes; really momentous developments in the curriculum did not occur until after 1860. Congregational schools would copy the system in vogue at Yale, Presbyterians that of Princeton; for the president of the newly-founded college, who had the determining voice in such matters, was usually a graduate of one of the older schools. The course was the same for all, in state schools as well as in private.[1] Just as in colonial days, it mattered not whether the student was looking forward to the study of law, or medicine or theology; in each case he was carried through the same set of lectures and recitations. No respectable college considered him fit for intelligent leadership in a community until he had absorbed Latin and Greek, mathematics and natural philosophy, and had received, in his senior year, a generous measure of the president's accumulated wisdom and experience in the many-sided course of moral philosophy.

Government and discipline, too, presented a monotonously regular aspect. Every college had trustees, the liaison between the school and its public; a president, the balance wheel of the whole; and, depending upon the size of the student body, a varying number of professors and tutors. The students lived in dormitories under the supervision of resident tutors, maintained regular hours of study, ate at a common table, and were dragooned to church on Sundays.[2] With minor variations this regime prevailed in the North and in the South, in large schools and in small, in Methodist colleges as well as in state universities. As might be ex-

[1] Snow, *op. cit., passim.* The subjects of instruction in the catalogs also show the similarity. There were, however, exceptions. Virginia was planned along different lines and Pennsylvania had always shown some independence in curriculum-building.

[2] Attendance at worship in the college chapel was usually compulsory, and on Sunday mornings the students were expected to go to a church of their own choosing.

pected, there was constant transgression of the rules, and college officers were frequently at a loss for effective means of discipline. In this phase of college life also the records have the same story to tell; the same youthful exuberance and uncouth pranks appeared everywhere, and few college histories were complete without the account of at least one great riot. Satan himself seems to have wrought with striking impartiality, for calves were tied in chapels and crackers exploded in tutors' rooms in the saintly College of New Jersey as well as in the godless University of Virginia.

In view of all this it is possible to speak of the typical American college. Individual differences existed, to be sure, differences of aim, method and achievement. There was Harvard at one end of the scale with its two-hundred-year tradition, its generous endowment, its cultivated faculty of fifteen members, its library of 35,000 volumes;[1] and at the other end were schools like Maryville College in Tennessee, where an itinerant Presbyterian preacher held forth in a log cabin and for six years did all the teaching and managing that was done.[2] But these were extremes, and most of the colleges lay well between them. In these colleges, large and small, public and private, the future intellectual leaders of America were to be trained "in all virtuous Habits, and all such useful Knowledge as may render them creditable to their Families and Friends, Ornaments to their Country, and useful to the Publick Weal in their Generations".[3] It was a considerable undertaking and laid a heavy responsibility upon the officers entrusted with its execution. Among these there was one whose shoulders carried a greater burden than any of the others. Placed in a position of authority and vested

[1] *The American Almanac for 1830.*

[2] S. T. Wilson, *A Century of Maryville College* (Maryville, Tenn., 1916), *passim.*

[3] Samuel Johnson, *loc. cit.*

with a goodly measure of power, the success or failure of an institution rested in a large measure upon him. In daily intimate contact with the undergraduates, he was in a position to influence them more than any one else, and their efficiency, character and outlook on life were chiefly his work. He was the greatest single force in college life. He made or marred the college. He was the president.

CHAPTER II

The Office

The office of president is as old as the college itself. It was in 1640 that the Rev. Henry Dunster, newly arrived from England, was chosen president of the college in Cambridge, that had been chartered four years earlier.[1] He was the first American college president. Beginning with his administration the office never lapsed, but continued through the period covered by this study, not only in Harvard but in every college of consequence in the country.[2] At the same time, again in keeping with English custom, the title varied. The chief executive of American colleges, though usually known as the president, might be styled rector, provost, principal, or chancellor. Each of these titles was in use at one time or another. Before 1745 Yale College was in charge of a rector,[3] a title common in Scotland and Germany, but also used to designate the heads of some of the Oxford colleges.[4] Another title for the same office, also known in

[1] Josiah Quincy, *The History of Harvard University* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1840), vol. i, p. 14. Nathaniel Eaton had first been put in charge, but was dismissed for cruelty and neglect. Dunster, therefore, was really the first president.

[2] Seventy-seven institutions of collegiate rank existing in 1840 have been covered by this survey. The *American Almanac* for 1841 lists an even hundred, but qualifies this by the remark that some of these were colleges in name only, and not properly classed as such.

[3] The charter of 1745 discarded the title of rector and adopted the more common one of president. F. B. Dexter, *Sketch of the History of Yale University* (New York, 1887), p. 28.

[4] Paul Monroe, *Cyclopedia of Education.*

Oxford and Cambridge,[1] was that of provost, which was adopted by the College of Philadelphia and continues to the present day to denote the chief administrative officer of the University of Pennsylvania.[2] Some of the smaller colleges modestly styled their presidents principals, a term more commonly applied to the heads of secondary and elementary schools or of the halls and colleges in British universities. Dickinson College and Jefferson College, in Pennsylvania, are cases in point.[3] Others, with less modesty, boldly proclaimed themselves universities and, lest anyone mistake their true character, dignified their chief executives with the title proper to such an office: chancellor. Thus one finds chancellors instead of presidents at the University of Nashville and the Western University of Pennsylvania.[4] Still another variation was adopted by the University of Virginia, whose trustees, after several unsuccessful attempts to obtain a president to their liking, dispensed with the title altogether and chose instead a chairman of the faculty, an office that was to rotate and thus give each faculty member an opportunity to be "dressed in a little brief authority".[5] But the vast

[1] Monroe, *op. cit.*

[2] H. M. Lippincott, *The University of Pennsylvania, Franklin's College* (Philadelphia, 1919), *passim.*

[3] For Dickinson *cf.* Benjamin Rush's letter to Charles Nisbet of May 15, 1784. Cited in Samuel Miller, *Memoir of the Rev. Charles Nisbet, D. D.* (New York, 1840), p. 112. For Jefferson *cf.* Joseph Smith, Smith, *History of Jefferson College* (Pittsburgh, 1857), *passim.*

[4] *Cf.* the catalogs of those institutions. The Massachusetts Constitution of 1780, in a section devoted to Harvard, refers to it indiscriminately as a college and again as a university. This was considered enough sanction for calling it Harvard University thenceforth. Quincy, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 176. Timothy Dwight of Yale, in a letter to Governor Nicholas of Virginia, commented on the prevailing confusion of terms. H. B. Adams, *Thomas Jefferson and the University of Virginia* (*U. S. Bureau of Education Circular of Information*, no. 1, 1888).

[5] P. A. Bruce, *History of the University of Virginia* (New York, 1920), vol. ii, p. 49.

majority of colleges followed the style set by Harvard and called their chief executive officer the president.[1]

Whatever the title adopted by the individual school, the office that it designated was everywhere essentially the same. Adequately to describe it is no simple task, for its duties were so many and varied, and its bounds so vague, as almost to defy accurate delineation. "A college presidency", says a recent distinguished incumbent, "is not a profession".[2] This was even more true a hundred years ago. It was an art, and was learned by doing. One did not prepare for it, as one did for the ministry or even a professorship. One was thrown into it and had to muddle through as best one could. Says the same authority, "The relations which the American college president holds are more numerous, diverse, and complex than those of any other educational officer."[3] An attempt is made in this chapter to describe these complex relations and thus to present an adequate picture of the activities of the old time college president.

A college came into being as a legal entity by virtue of the grant of a charter, which vested the supreme authority in a body of men known as the board of trustees or the corporation. The composition and functions of this body, to whom the president was primarily responsible, were not always and everywhere quite the same. Harvard represents one form of organization, that of dual control. The General Court of the colony had vested the immediate government of Harvard College in a corporation consisting of the president, the treasurer and five teaching fellows; and as a check on their activities it had created a larger body, the overseers, which was composed largely of government officials and ministers

[1] For a general discussion of these titles *cf.* also C. F. Thwing, *The College President* (New York, 1926), ch. i.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 234.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

of the adjoining towns. The corporation initiated measures but its acts were validated only by the consent of the overseers.[1] Under this charter Harvard continued to operate, even the Revolution leaving it virtually intact. The Massachusetts constitution of 1780 confirmed the Harvard charter rights. The board of overseers alone was reconstituted, a change made necessary by the collapse of royal authority. Henceforth this body was to include the governor, lieutenant-governor, council and senate of the state, together with six designated Congregational ministers.[2] Fifty-four years later the legislature opened membership in the overseers to ministers of Protestant denominations other than the Congregational, and in 1865 it permitted alumni to be substituted for the *ex-officio* government representatives.[3] Harvard thus completed the process of evolution from a state- and church-controlled college to a self-governing university, virtually independent of either authority.

Designed to secure prompt and efficient action without the surrender of theocratic control, the Harvard dual system was open to at least one serious criticism. It might, and did, lead to friction between the two governing bodies. The corporation, in touch with actual needs and problems, was apt to urge changes which the overseers, representing vested interests, might be loath to grant. Whether it was due to

[1] Quincy, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 589; charter of 1650. E. C. Parsons, *Educational Legislation and Administration of the Colonial Government* (New York, 1899), p. 12 *et seq.*

[2] The constitutional provisions are given in Quincy, vol. ii, p. 507.

[3] W. R. Thayer, *History and Customs of Harvard University* (*Universities and their Sons*, 5 vols., Boston, 1898), vol. i, pp. 88, 90. Parallel to this development there was a change from resident to non-resident government. In the 17th and early 18th century the tutors were usually members of the corporation. Since 1800, however, no tutor or professor has been a member. J. E. Kirkpatrick, "The Rise of Non-Resident Government in Harvard University", in *Harvard Graduates' Magazine*, vol. 31, no. 122.

this weakness or to other causes, the fact remains that the Harvard plan of administration found few imitators. Brown and Bowdoin were probably the only other colleges with two boards of control. At Brown the corporation was composed of twelve fellows, the president being one, and thirty-six trustees; all corporate action required the consent of both bodies.[1] Bowdoin, like Harvard, had a small body of trustees and a larger number of overseers, the latter validating the acts of the former.[2]

William and Mary, the second colonial college, was erected under Anglican auspices, with the Bishop of London as chancellor. The trustees created by the royal charter of 1693 later transferred the college endowment to the president and masters, who were the body corporate. Since the president was at the same time the bishop's commissary and thus head of the church in Virginia, most of the authority was concentrated in his person. After 1729, the date of the transfer, the trustees were merely a board of annual visitors with appointive powers. During the Revolution the state of Virginia assumed the functions of the Crown, but no essential changes were made in the charter.[3]

The charter of Yale, as formulated in 1745, created a single governing body, known as the president and fellows, which was a closed corporation with power to fill vacancies and to remove any member.[4] At first all its members were

[1] Parsons, *op. cit.*, p. 186 *et seq.*

[2] Louis C. Hatch, *The History of Bowdoin College* (Portland, Me., 1927), p. 5.

[3] H. B. Adams, *The College of William and Mary* (*U. S. Bureau of Education Circular of Information*, no. 1, 1887); Parsons, p. 361 *et seq.*; Jefferson's plans for education in Virginia are discussed *infra*, ch. v. The minutes of the faculty of William and Mary, published in the *William and Mary College Quarterly* (vols. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 13, 15), are first-hand information for the inner workings of the college machinery.

[4] Charter given in F. B. Dexter, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

ministers, but the insistent demands of the state authorities, especially after the Revolution, led to an official representation in the body, consisting of the governor, lieutenant-governor and six senators. That was in 1792; eighty years later the six senators were replaced by alumni.[1] This move in time brought about a preponderance of lay representatives and Yale, like Harvard, emerged from the control of the state and the tutelage of the church.

Of the three forms of administration described thus far, that of Yale came to be the most nearly typical. Harvard and William and Mary remained almost unique; the form of control common among later colleges was an adaptation of that in force at New Haven, with the property and government vested in a single body of trustees who, with the exception of the president, were not members of the instructional staff. The charters of Pennsylvania, Princeton and Columbia in the middle of the eighteenth century were modeled along these lines, as well as those of Rutgers and Dartmouth, the remaining colonial colleges.[2] In detail they differed. Columbia and Dartmouth had a large official representation on the board, Princeton scarcely any and Pennsylvania none. In contrast to Columbia, whose charter prescribed an Anglican president and definitely fixed the representation in the board of all the prominent Protestant bodies in New York, the basic law of Princeton made no such stipulations whatever. Strangely enough, Columbia rapidly became non-sectarian, while Princeton remained decidedly Presbyterian in character. Pennsylvania again differed from the others in that its president, or provost, was not a member of the trustees. Princeton, Dartmouth and Rutgers went through the Revolution without any charter changes, but

[1] C. H. Smith, *History of Yale University* (*Universities and their Sons*), vol. i, p. 273 and *passim*.

[2] Parsons, *op. cit.*, contains the charters of all these institutions.

Columbia and Pennsylvania were reorganized.[1] With all these variations the five colleges were alike in that they had unitary control under outside management. Their boards, which were self-perpetuating, held the property, procured and managed the funds, appointed, paid and removed the officers, and made the rules.

Their example was generally followed by the institutions that sprang up within the next half-century. Of the scores of colleges in all parts of the country that adopted this form of government, four Illinois foundations chartered in 1835 were typical. In one act the legislature of that state incorporated Illinois College, McKendree, Shurtleff and Jonesborough.[2] The provisions of this law call for a body of no more than fifteen trustees for each school, the president to be one. The corporation thus created was empowered to own property, make contracts, manage funds, enact by-laws, confer degrees, appoint, salary and remove officials, and fill its own vacancies.

Exceptions to this rule were those colleges that were under the direct control of a church denomination, and some—not

[1] An act of the legislature in 1784 confirmed the royal charter but placed the school, as Columbia College, under the control of the newly created Regents of the University of the State of New York. In 1787 a separate self-perpetuating board of trustees was named by the legislature and the charter privileges were again confirmed.

The charter of the College of Philadelphia was abrogated in 1779 and a new institution created by the Assembly: The University of the State of Pennsylvania. Ten years later the first college was revived with its privileges restored, and in 1791 the two institutions were merged as the University of Pennsylvania.

B. Matthews, ed., *A History of Columbia University 1754-1904* (New York, 1904), ch. vi, *passim*. Historical statement in *University of Pennsylvania Biographical Catalogue*.

[2] Illinois was under Congregational-Presbyterian control, McKendree was Methodist, Shurtleff Baptist. Jonesborough never went into operation. Charter in H. C. Rammelkamp, *Illinois College* (New Haven, Conn., 1928), appendix.

all—of the state institutions. Wesleyan, Allegheny after 1833, and Randolph-Macon were owned by Methodist conferences;[1] at Davidson the trustees and, for a time, the faculty were chosen by the surrounding presbyteries;[2] the trustees of South Carolina College were elected by the legislature for a term of four years.[3]

To staff these highly important administrative bodies it was customary to choose able, or at any rate prominent, men. A college represented the supreme social and intellectual effort of a community; to manage such undertakings one selects the best available material. As a rule ministers predominated. The president and fellows forming the Harvard corporation were clergymen; mention has been made of the clerical representation on the board of overseers. Until the provision of alumni representation in 1871 the members of the Yale corporation, with the exception of the public officials, were all ministers.[4] When Princeton was founded, twelve of its twenty-three trustees were Presbyterian ministers.[5]

At Columbia and Pennsylvania the influence of the clergy was less evident. The original Columbia charter, as stated, provided for official clerical representation. After the final reorganization by the state in 1787 the twenty-nine trustees included six doctors of divinity.[6] The first board of Pennsylvania contained no clergymen; business and professional men composed it.[7]

[1] James M. Buckley, *A History of Methodists in the United States* (New York, 1896), p. 375.

[2] C. R. Shaw, *Davidson College* (New York, 1923), p. 279.

[3] Edwin L. Green, *A History of the University of South Carolina* (Columbia, S. C., 1916), p. 11.

[4] *Catalogue of the Officers and Graduates of Yale University in New Haven 1701-1924.*

[5] Parsons, p. 322 *et seq.*

[6] The trustees are listed in the *Catalogue of Officers and Graduates of Columbia University from the foundation of King's College in 1754* (New York, 1916).

[7] Lippincott, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

The character of the governing boards of the post-Revolutionary colleges is indicated by the following figures, chosen at random from institutions East, West and South. The original board at Williams was to contain an equal number of clerical and lay members, eight of each.[1] Among the latter were two state legislators, a judge, a United States senator, and a prominent business man. Up to 1861 the records list thirty-three clergymen and forty-three laymen.[2] At Middlebury in Vermont the ratio of clerical to lay representation was four to twelve; of the latter four were at one time or another state representatives, four judges, one a congressman, four United States senators.[3] The totals for Union College in 1861 were nineteen clerical and forty-eight lay representatives, twenty-six of the latter being titled "honorable".[4] The corresponding figures for Amherst in the same year were twenty-four and thirty-eight.[5] Of the first thirteen elective trustees at South Carolina College three were preachers, of the lay members one was titled "doctor" and one "general".[6] This does not, perhaps, sufficiently indicate the ability and distinction of some of the founders of that school. Seven ministers—the Yale Band—and three prominent local men formed the first board of Illinois College.[7] Among the eighteen laymen who, together with six ministers, composed the board of Knox College in 1853,[8]

[1] L. W. Spring, *A History of Williams College* (Boston and New York, 1917), p. 32 and *passim*.

[2] *General Catalogue of the Officers and Graduates of Williams College*, 1910.

[3] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Middlebury College, 1800-1915*.

[4] *Union University Centennial Catalog, 1795-1895*.

[5] *General Catalogue of Amherst College, 1821-1910*.

[6] Green, *op. cit.*, p. 11; charter.

[7] Rammelkamp, *op. cit.*, ch. ii, *passim*.

[8] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knox College*, 1853.

were men like Orville H. Browning, Whig and Republican politician, later a member of Andrew Johnson's cabinet.

These were the governing bodies of American colleges, who prescribed the president's duties and determined his sphere of action. The possibilities of the presidential office were as broad as the mental outlook of the trustees, for every undertaking of any consequence required their consent. Whatever visions of future greatness the president might entertain, whatever plans and projects he might harbor, he could realize none of them until he had convinced the trustees of their soundness and desirability. If they approved, he might go ahead. They were the court of last resort; they sanctioned or censured the president's course of action. First of all, however, they laid down the rules that were to guide him in the conduct of his office.

The duties of the president, as expressed in the written instructions framed by the trustees, were much alike in all the colleges. A few examples will therefore suffice to show their general nature. The president of Princeton was required to preside at meetings of the faculty and execute their decisions; to preside at commencements and other ceremonies; to arrange for morning and evening prayers and Sunday worship; to lecture on the evidences of Christianity and teach any other subjects that he might choose; to visit the classes of the other instructors; and finally to attend to the general superintendence and to promote the interests and reputation of the college by every exertion in his power.[1] This was in 1802; half a century later, in 1851, the duties were still the same, for the laws of that year contain the identical catalog of powers and duties as those of 1802. The same static conditions prevailed at Columbia, for there too the executive authority, which differed little from that at Princeton, remained virtually unchanged throughout the first

[1] *Laws of the College of New Jersey* (1802).

half of the nineteenth century. The provost and the president between them held the same grant of powers in 1811, for instance, as the president did in 1851.[1]

Executive functions at Harvard early in the nineteenth century resembled those at Princeton and at Columbia. Here, too, the president had to exercise general superintendence, see that the course of instruction and discipline was executed, and preside at commencements. He called meetings of the "immediate government"—the faculty—and presided and voted at these. He was expected to teach, to counsel individual students, to make rules for student government (subject to the trustees' veto), to maintain discipline with the aid of the faculty, and to promote "virtue, piety, and good learning".[2] Besides being charged with teaching and general superintendence, the presiding professor (later called president) of the University of North Carolina was instructed to provide for morning and evening prayers, and to examine each student on Sunday evenings on morality and religion. Once a year at least he was to report to the trustees.[3] Western schools obviously copied those of the East. Presidents' instructions in Ohio and Kentucky institutions show the same arrangement and sometimes the

[1] *Statutes of Columbia College* for 1811 and 1851. The provost's office was a subterfuge. Columbia was obliged to choose an Episcopalian as president in order to retain valuable property which had been donated by Trinity Church on that condition. When President Moore resigned his office in 1811 there was considerable public demand for John Mason, a prominent Presbyterian clergyman, as his successor. Faced with this dilemma the trustees created the office of provost and appointed Mason to fill it. The executive functions were divided, the ceremonial part being left in the hands of the president, but actual control being vested in the provost. The arrangement lasted from 1811-1816, when Mason resigned and the office lapsed. Brander Matthews, ed., *A History of Columbia University* (New York, 1904), p. 97.

[2] *Laws of Harvard College* for 1814.

[3] Kemp P. Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina* (Raleigh, N. C., 1907), vol. i, p. 54.

identical phraseology as those of Harvard, Princeton, and Columbia.[1] As concise and comprehensive a statement of the president's duties and powers as any that was found is the chapter on the president in the laws of the University of Nashville, in Tennessee. It is given in full:

1. To the President is committed the general superintendence of the interests and reputation of the University, which he is bound to promote and maintain by every exertion in his power.
2. He is, *ex officio,* President of the Board of Trustees, and of the Faculty, when present with them, and also the administrator of their decisions in cases of discipline.
3. He has a right to be present at the recitation of any class in the institution, as often as he may see proper, and to conduct or hear recitation if he choose.
4. He will take such branches of instruction into his own hands, as he may judge that the number of other teachers and the exigencies of the institution shall render necessary and expedient.
5. All the religious exercises and studies of the University are committed to his direction: and the other members of the faculty are required to render him such assistance as may be deemed necessary to the punctual and faithful discharge of these duties.
6. He is to preside at examinations and commencements, and to confer all degrees.[2]

Several functions stand out in an analysis of all these various instructions. First of all the president was the executive, who administered the government as outlined in the charter and augmented by trustees' laws, and carried out the decisions of the faculty. He was primarily responsible for

[1] Transylvania, Georgetown in Kentucky. Nashville and Oberlin are cases in point.

[2] *Laws of the University of Nashville in Tennessee* (Nashville, 1835), ch. ii.

observance of the rules of the college by all of its members. Alone or with the aid of the faculty he maintained order, punished offenders, and called the attention of the board to all grave infractions of the rules. In the second place the president was a teacher. Whether stated in the laws or not, it was apparently assumed that he would teach one or more subjects of the curriculum. In the course of this inquiry, which included almost three hundred men, not one was discovered of whom it can positively be stated that he did not conduct classes as part of his work. The nature and importance of this phase of the president's activity will be discussed in a subsequent chapter. Finally the president was expected to be the spiritual counselor, or pastor, of the students entrusted to his care. Not only the school collectively with its rules and its curriculum was to be the object of his concern, but the problems of the individual students as well. Directions to counsel the students, to examine them in morals and religion, and to conduct religious exercises are all evidence of the intention to make him the moral and spiritual leader, as well as the first professor and the chief executive, of the institution over which he presided.

Less apparent, because not always clearly indicated in the laws, but extremely important nevertheless, was the president's relation to the trustees. A successful administration in a large measure depended upon the skill with which he performed his twofold function of expert adviser and of *liaison* between the trustees and the faculty. It was this phase of his duties, furthermore, that most clearly differentiated the office of the American college president from that of his English and Scottish prototypes. His relative independence of action and the breadth of his discretionary powers mark him a different kind of executive from the college principal in Oxford or Edinburgh, for the latter, required to carry out the orders of the rector, the chancellor and the council,

all of whom were his superiors, was after all only an official of subordinate rank.

Historically the president or principal was the senior teaching fellow of a hall or college within the British university.[1] As such he was responsible for the work of the other tutors and for the maintenance of discipline.[2] An administrative functionary, he executed the orders of his superiors, but did not as a rule determine policies. At Edinburgh he was responsible to the rector, "the eye of the Council of the Town," who inspected the college, held the principal and tutors to their duties and made overtures to the council.[3] At Glasgow the principal was subordinate to the rector's court, in which he held membership but had no controlling voice.[4] He might even be deposed by the rector, the dean and two local preachers.[5]

After the Reformation the office assumed greater importance. As part of their educational program the reformers, both in England and in Scotland, promoted colleges in preference to the existing universities, for the latter, as experience had shown, had a way of speaking their mind, and because of their size and prestige were difficult to control; a college, on the other hand, either within the university precincts or as an independent establishment, could more easily be kept orthodox.[6] Following Calvin's example, who had founded a college at Geneva under the auspices of the municipal council, they established new colleges or reorganized

[1] Sir Alexander Grant, *The Story of the University of Edinburgh* (2 vols., London, 1884), vol. i, p. 155 note.

[2] Charles E. Mallet, *A History of the University of Oxford* (3 vols., London, 1924), vol. i, p. 43. Grant, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 199.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] David Murray, *Memories of the Old College of Glasgow* (Glasgow, 1927), p. 489.

[5] Grant, vol. i, p. 74.

[6] *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 125.

old ones, at Cambridge, Glasgow and Edinburgh. As the college became a more important educational unit, its principal rose to prominence correspondingly, and one now finds a man like Andrew Melville planning, organizing, effecting changes in the curriculum, all largely on his own initiative.[1]

It was in this period, when the presidential office was in the ascendant, that the first American colleges were founded. Reenforced by the primitive environment, that made elaborately organized universities impossible,[2] the tendency to exalt the college and its executive gained headway, until in time there evolved a new type of educational official: the American college president.

Not infrequently the prime mover and organizer of a new college, nearly always of superior academic training and experience as compared to the trustees, it was but natural that the president should be the one to whom the latter turned for advice in regard to the many and novel problems that confronted them. Within their legislative competence, it will be remembered, were such matters as admissions, examinations, courses of study, degrees, vacations, punishments, expenses, the distribution of work among the faculty members, meals and library facilities. How could they reach intelligent decisions on any of these without the expert counsel of the president?

Of less importance, but always part of the functions associated with the presidential office, were such routine and ceremonial activities as signing diplomas and presiding at examinations and commencements. Yet even these acts might be clothed with significance, for it was on such occasions that the college came into contact with the community,

[1] Grant, vol. i, p. 78. A similar development at Oxford and Cambridge is indicated in Albert Mansbridge, *The Older Universities of England* (Boston and New York, 1923), ch. iii, *passim*.

[2] *Cf. supra*, ch. i.

and the president's public demeanor, no less than his public utterances, might go a long way towards influencing public opinion favorably or otherwise. When President Monroe and, a few years later, General Lafayette were received at Harvard, the courteous and dignified bearing of President Kirkland not only did honor to his distinguished visitors, but enhanced the prestige of Harvard University as well.[1]

As though the round of official duties described above were not enough to keep him occupied, the president was frequently saddled with other tasks. There fell to his lot odds and ends of business that no one else attended to, and that might be construed as lying within the scope of his executive duties. Thus the presidents of Columbia were at various times charged with purchasing books and apparatus, providing hooks for cloaks in classrooms, selecting a cemetery lot, and reporting faculty members' attendance at prayers.[2] More commonly it was in the newer colleges, operating in primitive surroundings, poorly staffed and poorly equipped, that the president was forced into the role of jack of all trades. Eleazar Wheelock tells of putting up the college building, his own house, a sawmill, a gristmill, two barns, and a malthouse, besides clearing over seventy acres and raising crops of hay and corn, all in order that his college, Dartmouth, might be more nearly self-supporting.[3] In addition he governed the college, carried a full teaching load, and preached on Sundays.[4] Besides being the only instructor for a number of years, Daniel C. Sanders, pioneer president of the Uni-

[1] A. Young, *A Discourse on the Life and Character of the Rev. John Thornton Kirkland* (Boston, 1840), p. 62.

[2] *Resolutions Passed by the Trustees of Columbia College from 1820-1868* (New York, 1868), *passim.*

[3] *A Plain and Faithful Narrative of the Original Design, Rise, Progress and present State of the Indian Charity-school at Lebanon, in Connecticut* (9 vols., Boston, 1763), vol. vii, p. 3.

[4] *Ibid.*

versity of Vermont, managed lands and funds, supervised the erection of buildings, and is said to have helped chop down the tall pines.[1] After Samuel Doak had founded the first institution of higher learning west of the Alleghenies and been chosen its president, he went east, secured a small library, loaded the books upon pack horses, and carried them five hundred miles to his college in the wilderness.[2] The chronicler of Princeton gives a glimpse of the life of Samuel Stanhope Smith, president at the turn of the century: "He taught the upper-classmen in belles-lettres, criticism and composition, in moral philosophy. . . . He presided at evening prayers and the oratorical exercises which followed; once a week he met the Theological Society, composed of candidates for the ministry; in his regular turn he sat at the high table in the refectory; he was the college disciplinary officer, counseling, censuring, and banishing students, and he attended to all the college correspondence, receiving and answering seldom less than six hundred letters a year." [3] Among the afflictions of James Manning, first president of Brown, were such things as listening to complaints of undergraduates and their fathers and mothers, which he answered "now and then"; waiting on visitors to the college; and attending the funeral of every baby that died in Providence. In addition he preached twice a week, visited the sick, and in spare moments cultivated his garden and went to market.[4]

Preaching, visiting the sick, and going to funerals had no direct connection with the needs of the college, but were tasks that had to be done, nevertheless, for Manning, like most of

[1] Biographical sketch of Sanders in *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography.*

[2] Biographical sketch of Doak, *ibid.*

[3] V. L. Collins, *Princeton* (N. Y., 1914), p. 111.

[4] W. C. Bronson, *The History of Brown University* (Providence, R. I., 1914), p. 96.

his fellows, was an ordained minister. During the greater part of his administration he served as pastor of a Baptist church in Providence.[1] The college president must be a minister, that was the rule; and he frequently retained some or all of his pastoral work after assuming his new office. William Smith, first provost of the College of Philadelphia, was at the same time rector of Christ church.[2] In Carlisle President Nisbet of Dickinson alternated with one of his colleagues of the faculty in supplying the pulpit of the Presbyterian church.[3] During half a lifetime spent as executive of western Pennsylvania colleges Mathew Brown still found it possible to attend to pastoral duties.[4] Two large congregations claimed the attention of Isaac Anderson, president of Maryville in Tennessee.[5] Wheelock at Dartmouth,[6] Finney at Oberlin,[7] and many others, carried this double load. Most of the above examples, to be sure, portray the president amid frontier surroundings, in communities where specialization in the professions had not yet advanced to the point of differentiating between pastor and educator.[8] But in the older institutions, too, the president,

[1] In a letter written in 1786 he complains that he cannot do justice to both positions. But he did not resign his pastorate until 1791. R. A. Guild, *Early History of Brown University* (Providence, R. I., 1897), pp. 427, 494.

[2] Lippincott, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

[3] C. F. Himes, *A Sketch of Dickinson College* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1879), p. 42.

[4] Joseph Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

[5] S. T. Wilson, *A Century of Maryville College 1819-1919* (Maryville, Tenn.), ch. vii.

[6] Wheelock, *Narrative.*

[7] *Memoirs of the Rev. Charles G. Finney* (New York, 1876), p. 471.

[8] A transition is indicated in the petition for the chartering of Union College, in which it is stated that no teaching pastor shall have charge of a congregation at the same time. A. V. Raymond, *Union University* (New York 1907), p. 23.

while not usually permanent pastor of a congregation, was expected to preach as a matter of course, either in the college chapel, or as vacancy pastor, or on special occasions. The greater his renown, the more he was in demand. On national holidays, on commemorative occasions, in missionary, revival and reform movements, whenever in short a person of prominence might lend dignity, the college president, if one was available, was sure to be pressed into service. The great numbers of printed sermons attest this.

If all the American colleges had been old and established institutions, with incomes that were adequate and secure, constituencies that were permanent and faithful, and educational practices that were universally accepted and satisfactory, the demands on their chief executives might have been much less exacting. The latter could then have spent their time teaching, preaching, maintaining routine discipline, and presiding on ceremonial occasions. They could have led dignified and even pleasant lives and, provided they had the knack of managing boys, there need have been little to disturb the even tenor of their way. But such a tranquil existence was the lot of few. For the colleges, like all of American society, were in a state of flux. Although the educational developments of the period between the Revolution and the Civil War were not so striking or far-reaching as those that have come since 1870, still the former era could hardly be called static. It was characterized, however, not so much by inward growth as by outward expansion.

By 1840 the nine Revolutionary colleges had grown to be a hundred.[1] They were found the country over, from Maine to Georgia, and from the Atlantic to the Mississippi. Not all of them could justify their existence; not all of them supplied a real demand. Too often it was sectarian loyalty—or

[1] *American Almanac* for 1841.

jealousy—that led to such unnecessary foundations, or else the enthusiasm of trustees induced them to plant two colleges where one had scarcely managed to maintain itself before. As might have been foreseen, the result of this heedless optimism was frequently a bitter struggle for survival, in which real educational needs and interests were all but lost sight of. Williams and Amherst in Massachusetts, Western Reserve and Oberlin in Ohio, Washington and Jefferson in Pennsylvania, and numerous Kentucky and Tennessee institutions suffered from rivalries of this nature.[1]

Under such conditions the burden of setting the struggling college on its feet almost invariably fell upon the president. Not teaching, preaching or discipline were his gravest problems, but devising means of rendering his school more attractive than others, and thus securing its continued existence. His educational theories and administrative policies, which he had imbibed while a student and a tutor at Yale or Princeton,[2] might be sound and fixed for a life-time, but they did not usually include practical suggestions for raising an endowment fund, acquiring a library or a philosophical cabinet, paying for a new building, increasing the enrollment, or harmonizing the conflicting desires of Presbyterian and Methodist patrons. It was questions of this kind that were most apt to harass him, especially in new and small colleges; such were the problems he could expect to face when he pledged himself to promote and maintain the best interests of the school by every exertion in his power. If he solved these satisfactorily he might be an indifferent teacher, a negligible scholar, even a mediocre preacher, but as a college president he was a success. In affording opportunities for

[1] To argue, *ex eventu*, that some of the institutions named are flourishing today, is to ignore the growing wealth and population of the country and changing conditions in general.

[2] For detailed facts and statistics on this point *cf. infra*, ch. v.

displaying initiative and creative energy in overcoming obstacles and advancing the interests of the college, the possibilities of the office were almost unlimited. Not every president had his ingenuity taxed as severely as Josiah Meigs, who, when he went down to Athens, Georgia, to open the state university, found it in a town of two houses, without funds or buildings, and who conducted the first classes under an oak tree.[1] But in a greater or lesser degree such problems fell to the lot of all. Bishop Simpson resigned the presidency of Indiana Asbury in 1848, completely worn out. For, as he himself stated, teaching and governing were the least of his labors. There was the unending round of preaching and lecturing, besides the practical questions that constantly arose. Finance, law, real estate, brick and mortar—the president must know them all.[2]

As a rule these difficulties, under which so many colleges labored, and with which so many presidents manfully contended, resolved themselves into questions of finance. If ample funds were available they did not loom nearly so formidable, and were apt to settle themselves in course of time. To obtain funds was not infrequently the most urgent business of the head of the school, even though this duty might not be directly mentioned at all in the trustees' laws. College histories everywhere have the same story to tell of adverse conditions, financial stringency, the threat of complete extinction; then the appointment of a president who by clever management or force of personality secured the required funds and saved the school. William Smith, first provost of the University of Pennsylvania, made possible the

[1] He came down intending to present a complete plan of education to the trustees. Instead, he writes, he was set to work making bricks. Wm. M. Meigs, *Life of Josiah Meigs* (Philadelphia, 1887), pp. 45, 48.

[2] George R. Crooks, *The Life of Bishop Matthew Simpson* (New York, 1890), p. 253.

realization of Franklin's project by collecting twenty thousand pounds for this purpose, both in the colonies and in Europe.[1] At about the same time President Witherspoon of Princeton was trying to place the finances of that school on a firm basis by repeated "foraging expeditions".[2] His successor, S. S. Smith, "assiduously attended" the legislature to secure financial aid.[3] A half century later, when Princeton had again fallen upon evil days, it was John McLean who in a long career first as vice-president and then as president recovered its competence and restored its prestige. Through his energy and resourcefulness the vested funds were increased by $240,000.[4] Ezra Stiles secured state aid for Yale by a concession that gave the governor and some of the legislators membership in the college corporation.[5] Newly elected presidents of projected Western colleges sometimes began their official duties with a round of the older states for the purpose of securing money, books and apparatus. In this way Allegheny College was started,[6] and Wabash,[7] and Kenyon. In the interests of the last-named Bishop Philander Chase conducted an extensive campaign of propaganda. He issued appeals, interviewed prominent

[1] Lippincott, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

[2] V. L. Collins, *President Witherspoon* (Princeton, N. J., 1925), vol. ii, pp. 85, 138.

[3] John MacLean, *History of the College of New Jersey* (2 vols., Philadelphia, 1877), vol. ii, p. 24.

[4] Collins, *Princeton*, ch. iv, *passim*.

[5] Dexter, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

[6] Timothy Alden, its first president, made a tour of New England to gather subscriptions. E. A. Smith, *Allegheny—A Century of Education* (Meadvillle, Pa., 1916), p. 18.

[7] Elihu Baldwin collected money in the East before going out to Indiana to take charge of the new institution. E. F. Hatfield, *Patient Continuance in Well-Doing: A Memoir of Elihu W. Baldwin, D. D.* (New York, 1843), p. 313.

people—John Quincy Adams gave a hundred dollars—, and even went to England with his plea, as William Smith, John Witherspoon, and John Wheelock had done before him. His contributors included New England sewing circles and members of the British House of Lords.[1]

President Griffin saved Williams College by raising $25,000, of which, by the way, he contributed one thousand himself.[2] A similar service was performed for Williams' near neighbor, Amherst, by President Hitchcock, whose standing as a scientist added weight to his appeals. He held the presidency only long enough to relieve the financial embarrassment of his college, then resigned and resumed his professorship.[3] Jasper Adams took hold of the moribund College of Charleston in 1824, worked like a galley slave to restore confidence in the school and secure money for it, and succeeded in a few years in converting its deficit into a surplus and making it one of the largest and most flourishing institutions in the South.[4] The chronicler of Miami University records with satisfaction that President Bishop was such an able financier that he had a surplus at the close of nearly every year of his administration.[5] President Beecher and other members of the Yale Band collected $80,000 for Illinois College, only to see most of it swept away in the panic of 1837.[6] Jonathan Blanchard thus summarized his financial activities at Knox:

[1] Philander Chase, *A Plea for the West* (Philadelphia, 1826).

[2] C. Durfee, *History of Williams College* (Boston, 1860), p. 198.

[3] W. S. Tyler, *A History of Amherst College* (New York, 1895), p. 114 and *passim*.

[4] *History of Higher Education in South Carolina* (*U. S. Bureau of Education Circular of Information*, no. 1, 1888).

[5] Tobey and Thompson, *The Diamond Anniversary Volume, Miami University* (Hamilton, O., 1899), p. 82.

[6] Rammelkamp, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

I had found the college $5,000 in debt and running behind five dollars a day. I credited the treasury with more than $6,000 given me for my personal support. . . . I wrote the College diploma, procured the College seal; a library; graduated thirteen classes; and left Knox College free from debt, and worth $400,000.[1]

While professor at the University of Mississippi F. A. P. Barnard unearthed records to show that the state owed the university $900,000. A year later he was chosen president.[2] In one instance at least an executive's enthusiasm led him to overshoot the mark. President Davis of Middlebury was so convincingly eloquent that people subscribed more than they were worth. Later they were obliged to default, and the college obtained less than one-third of the underwritten sum.[3] Union College was a struggling little institution, unable to meet an annual budget of less than four thousand dollars, until Eliphalet Nott became its president. He saved the situation; by his " unwearied exertions " and " able eloquence " he moved the state legislature to authorize several lotteries, and by his skillful management of the proceeds of these clumsy and generally unproductive expedients he realized several hundred thousand dollars for the school.[4]

Lotteries, by the way, so commonly used a century and more ago to finance projects of all kinds, were often resorted to for the purpose of aiding needy educational institutions.[5]

[1] " My Life Work ", in *Sermons and Addresses* (Chicago, 1892).

[2] John Fulton, *Memoirs of Frederick A. P. Barnard* (New York, 1896), p. 199.

[3] " Middlebury College ", in the *New England Magazine*, Oct., 1894.

[4] C. Van Santvoord, *Memoirs of Eliphalet Nott* (New York, 1876), ch. x, *passim*.

[5] Lottery methods are well illustrated by one conducted by Rutgers under authorization of the New Jersey legislature in 1812. The details are from the *Fredonian* of Feb. 27, 1812. The total number of tickets issued was 15,000, and they sold at seven dollars each. The gross yield

Colleges in New York and Pennsylvania were repeatedly empowered to conduct lotteries, and various state and private schools in New England, the South and the West were their beneficiaries.[1] But the overhead expense of the lottery was great and the net return small; a fact which reenforced the moral sentiment that was being roused against this form of financing to such a degree that by the middle of the nineteenth century it seems to have lapsed entirely.

Another method of raising funds, especially favored by small schools, was the perpetual scholarship plan. Once this plan was decided upon, the president and perhaps the faculty or special agents would wage an active campaign in the college territory for the purpose of selling life scholarships, which entitled the purchaser and sometimes all the members of his family to free tuition for an indefinite period. They were sold for as little as twenty-five dollars. By this method President Homer Clark of Allegheny College, with the aid of surrounding Methodist conferences, succeeded in collecting ninety thousand dollars in a whirlwind "drive".[2] Asa Mahan, first president of Oberlin, secured one hundred thousand dollars by a scholarship sale;[3] Davidson in North Carolina was kept from disintegrating by a similar campaign;[4]

was thus $105,000. There were 5031 prizes, the highest one paying $25,000, and 9969 blanks. Advertisements in the paper appealed to the gambling instinct. The lottery is spoken of as a high road to fortune, an easy way of acquiring a snug sum, etc. As often happened, the lottery resulted in conflicting claims and legal wrangles, and probably netted the college no more than $10,000. The story is told in William H. S. Demarest, *A History of Rutgers College* (New Brunswick, N. J., 1924), p. 233.

[1] *Cf.* F. Hough, *Historical and Statistical Record of the University of the State of New York* (Albany, 1885), *passim*; Demarest, *op. cit.*; B. P. Smith, *op. cit.*; Himes, *op. cit.*; Battle, *op. cit.*; Collins, *op. cit.*

[2] E. A. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

[3] Biographical sketch in *National Cyclopaedia.*

[4] C. R. Shaw, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

Randolph-Macon in Virginia adopted the plan, selling scholarships for six hundred dollars each.[1] The scholarship plan accomplished its object only when most of the holders of certificates regarded their purchase as a donation and refused to avail themselves of its privileges. If, as sometimes happened, a large proportion of the purchasers actually enrolled as students, the plan defeated itself, for then the cost of maintenance rose above the value of the scholarship and the financial difficulty, instead of being solved, was aggravated.

Scholarship, lottery, legislative grant, private subscription, all of them were resorted to by colleges desirous of improving themselves. Whatever the method adopted, the president was the largest single factor determining the success of the undertaking. Trustees might initiate the measure or work out its details, faculty members, paid agents, and denominational conferences might help, but the measure of achievement was directly proportional to the energy and influence of the head of the institution. If his character was such as to inspire confidence, people would give; if his powers of persuasion were adequate, legislators would loosen purse-strings. He made the gold to flow by his personal efforts and personal magnetism; without him the college could do nothing.

The financier-president, so typical a figure, is to be explained by the peculiar conditions of his time. Higher education in the United States was not dominated by a few large universities, as was the case in European countries, but was distributed among many small colleges. The size of the country alone would account for this. To send a boy from the frontier to Yale or Princeton was quite an undertaking, and in most cases impossible. But the fathers of such boys,

[1] R. Irby, *History of Randolph-Macon College* (Richmond, Va., 1899), p. 72.

living in communities that took their democracy seriously, might feel that their sons were entitled to the same advantages as the sons of the well-to-do in the older portions of the country. If the boy could not go to college, then college must come to him. And so America became the land of neighborhood colleges.

The situation was aggravated by sectarian rivalries. If the Presbyterians had established a college in a town, the Methodists or Baptists considered it their duty to erect an institution in the same region, in order to provide for the educational and religious needs of their own people. As a result many a community was overstocked with colleges, all of them competing for its good-will and financial support. The presidents of such institutions, whether they liked it or not, were forced into the struggle, for the continued existence of their college depended upon their ability to raise money.

Comparable to the variety of the presidents' activities is the range of the salaries they received. No generalization will be attempted because no general facts have been discovered. The older schools, to be sure, paid more than the newer and smaller, and at the close of the period salaries were higher than at the beginning. But all that is natural enough and hardly requires proof. A few figures however may be interesting. At Columbia salaries advanced from $1000 in 1787 to $3,500 in 1857.[1] Hamilton allowed $1,800 in 1812, reduced this to $1,200 in 1827, returned to $1,800 the following year, and was paying $2,000 in 1858.[2] The figures at Rutgers in 1810 were $1,700 plus $300 for rent; in 1840 it paid $2,500.[3] North Carolina began with $1,000 in 1797

[1] *Resolutions Passed by the Trustees of Columbia College from 1820-1868*, p. 127 and *passim*. *Cf.* also Matthews, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

[2] *Documentary History of Hamilton College* (Clinton, N. Y., 1922), pp. 123, 193, 247.

[3] Demarest, *op. cit.*, pp. 218, 335.

and increased the amount to $2,250 by 1855.[1] South Carolina paid $2,500 as early as 1801 and increased this to $3,000 in 1836.[2] For twenty years beginning in 1802 the salary at Jefferson in Pennsylvania fluctuated between $533 and $800.[3] Miami raised the amount from $800 to $1,200 during the administration of President Bishop, 1824-41.[4] Transylvania showed an increase from $450 in 1802 to $2,250 in 1817.[5] The latter amount was decided upon in order to secure the services of Horace Holley; after his departure the salary was reduced to $2,000.[6] Other illustrative figures are as follows: Vermont $600 in 1800;[7] Princeton $1,600 in 1804;[8] Amherst $1,200 in 1821;[9] Kenyon $800 in 1830;[10] Denison $600 in 1830;[11] Davidson $1,200 in 1840;[12] Bowdoin $1,500 in 1840;[13] Harvard $2,235 in 1840;[14] the College of Charleston $2,500 in 1827;[15] Illinois $1,100 in 1837;[16] Indiana $1,300 in 1832.[17]

[1] Battle, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 173, 652.

[2] Green, *op. cit.*, pp. 21, 47.

[3] Joseph Smith, *op. cit., passim.*

[4] Tobey and Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 79, 82.

[5] Transylvania University Records (mss. copy), *passim.*

[6] R. and J. Peter, *Transylvania University* (Louisville, Ky., 1896), p. 158.

[7] Biographical sketch of D. C. Sanders, the first president, in *National Cyclopaedia.*

[8] Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

[9] Trustees' resolutions, quoted in Tyler, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[10] *Kenyon College*, p. 12.

[11] *Memorial Volume of Denison University* (Granville, O., 1907), p. 18.

[12] Shaw, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

[13] Cleaveland, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

[14] Treasurer's statement, quoted in Quincy, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 602.

[15] *Cf. supra*, note 52.

[16] Rammelkamp, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

[17] Banta, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

These figures do not tell the whole story. As a rule the use of a house was included in the compensation. The president's house, sometimes surrounded by a garden, was to be found on most campuses and was generally taken for granted. Perquisites, too, in the form of tuition and diploma fees often swelled the total income. The better the enrollment therefore, the larger the amount one could expect. At Transylvania in 1796 the president was allowed half the tuition money and the products of the farm;[1] Kenyon in its early days had the same arrangements in regard to the farm products.[2] The Columbia trustees abolished the perquisites in 1857—a fee of eight dollars for each diploma—but voted instead a substantial salary increase.[3] More than one college head increased his income by taking charge of the local church or serving as assistant to the pastor. The Rev. Samuel Johnson, while president of King's College, was also assistant pastor of Trinity Church. He received £250 from the former, and £150 from the latter.[4] The first president of Vermont and an early president of Denison each received four hundred dollars for their congregational labors,[5] and many others supplemented their salaries in the same way.

On the face of things it appears as if the old college president was in a position to lead a decent, at times even a comfortable existence. Two thousand and a house a century ago was not bad pay, and even six hundred was tolerable in regions where a quart of milk was to be had for one-and-a-half cents, and thirteen "chickings" for sixty-three cents,[6]

[1] R. and J. Peter, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

[2] *Cf. supra*, note 75.

[3] *Resolutions*, p. 127.

[4] Matthews, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

[5] *Cf. supra*, p. 59, note 1. *Cf.*, for Denison, the *Memorial Volume*, p. 43.

[6] *Memorial Volume of Denison University, loc. cit.*

especially when the salary included a house and garden. But there was another side to the picture. Performance sometimes fell short of promise; the salaries contracted for were not always paid, nor were the house and garden always forthcoming. The first president of Davidson was to receive $1200, but was paid only a thousand while in office, the remainder coming tardily after he had resigned.[1] Charles Nisbet was called from Scotland to be principal of Dickinson College and promised an annual salary of £200 sterling. This was reduced to $800 soon after his arrival and paid very irregularly at that.[2] In a letter to a friend he complained that the apostle Paul himself would have found Carlisle impossible, for his constituents would have starved him out.[3] At the time of his death Nisbet's salary was over four years in arrears and had to be recovered by legal action.[4] In 1810 the trustees of Rutgers voted the president $1700 and an allowance of three hundred for rent, the latter however to flow from an anticipated fund which never materialized; what he actually received, according to his own report to the synod, was $771.86 in two years.[5] The president of Hamilton was to receive $1,800 with a house and garden. This was in 1812. In 1858 it was suggested at a trustees' meeting that it was high time to build that house.[6] When Timothy Alden resigned at Allegheny in 1831 he was allowed $3,200 in lieu of sixteen years' salary, which had seldom been paid.[7] For the first ten years of its

[1] Shaw, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

[2] Samuel Miller, *Memoir of the Rev. Charles Nisbet, D. D.*, (New York, 1840), p. 287.

[3] Letter to Charles Wallace, Sep. 2, 1790, New York Public Library.

[4] Miller, *loc. cit.*

[5] Demarest, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

[6] *Documentary History of Hamilton College*, p. 247.

[7] E. A. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

existence Maryville College in Tennessee paid no salaries at all, the president and faculty supporting themselves by preaching and farming.[1] Because his salary was so far in arrears, the children of President Sturtevant of Illinois at times had to content themselves with meals consisting of bread-crumbs in water, sweetened with molasses.[2] Such were the actual conditions in many colleges. Small wonder that presidents resigned because of inadequate support for themselves and their families, for not all were as fortunate as Eliphalet Nott, who in course of time acquired an independent fortune of such size that at his death he was able to leave a bequest of six hundred thousand dollars to Union College.[3]

In the conduct of his office the president was of course limited by the provisions of the charter, the laws of the trustees, and to some extent the resolutions of the faculty. Since all three of these factors were variables, his freedom of action was not everywhere the same. A relatively independent position was that of the president of Yale, who was the ranking member of the corporation; a much narrower sphere of action, on the other hand, was allotted the provost of the University of Pennsylvania, who was not even permitted to attend trustees' meetings and, as a result, occupied a decidedly subordinate position.[4] The nature of his work as chief executive made membership in the board of trustees almost essential for the president. This fact was recognized in most institutions and not infrequently he was chairman of the board. The president's powers, as was pointed out earlier in this chapter, were often phrased in very general

[1] S. T. Wilson, *op. cit.*, ch. vi, *passim.*

[2] Rammelkamp, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

[3] F. Hough, *op. cit.*, p. 157 note.

[4] Dexter, *op. cit.*, p. 28; Lippincott, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

terms, and the actual range of his authority in any one case was a matter of interpretation. Whether his instructions were to be broadly or narrowly construed depended, naturally enough, upon the local situation, the traditions of the school, the temper of the board and the character of the executive.

A reliable president might under unusual circumstances be given extraordinary grants of power, as when John Wheelock was authorized by the trustees of Dartmouth to take over the control of finances and all external interests of the college, a task which he performed for a period of five years.[1] The wise president made his conditions before accepting office. In consenting to come to Oberlin Charles G. Finney stipulated that the president and faculty were to be free from any interference on the part of the trustees in matters of "internal regulation".[2] After having proved himself indispensable to the University of Mississippi President Barnard asked the trustees, who up to this time had regulated even the ringing of bells, for more powers and wider discretion. He had his way.[3] After Thomas Cooper had been chosen head of South Carolina College the trustees asked him to teach metaphysics, as was customary, but he persuaded them that metaphysics was not worth a place in the curriculum and taught political science, his specialty, instead.[4]

Not always, however, were trustees so complaisant. Those of Columbia appointed a special committee in 1808 to revise the course of study of the institution and raise its standards. This committee consisted of prominent citizens of New York, but the president of Columbia was not a member.

[1] John Wheelock, *Sketches of the History of Dartmouth College and Moors' Charity School ... from the year 1779 to the year 1815*, p. 31.

[2] Finney, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

[3] Fulton, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

[4] Green, *op. cit.*, ch. iii, *passim.*

The reform came as a result of outside pressure and was carried out apparently over his head.[1] Elsewhere too the president's discretionary powers were at times limited. The example of the provost of Pennsylvania has been cited. The trustees there not only approved, but determined the curriculum, and the provost had no voice in the deliberations. In the University of Virginia the chairman of the faculty was instructed to report regularly concerning delinquent students and the work of the other professors as well.[2] And the Princeton board went so far on one occasion as to examine the faculty's minutes and to censure its secretary for neglecting to number the pages of the record book.[3] More than one school was hindered in its development by chronic friction between trustees and president. Dickinson suffered for years on this account, because a clause in the charter gave trustees and faculty joint control of discipline.[4] Major D. B. Douglass, the first lay president of Kenyon, was asked to resign after a successful administration of four years, apparently because in his eagerness to advance the interests of the school he had exceeded his competence and infringed upon the prerogative of the bishop, who was chairman of the board of trustees.[5]

A well-constructed charter and intelligent legislation by trustees were prime requisites for the smooth functioning of the administrative organization of a college. There must

[1] Matthews, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

[2] Bruce, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 50.

[3] Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

[4] Himes, *op. cit.*, p. 51 and *passim.*

[5] The writer of the sketch in *Kenyon College* calls him able but ahead of his time. Douglass himself published an elaborate statement justifying his conduct and charging Bishop McIlvaine with highhanded and unfair dealing: *Statement of Facts and Circumstances connected with the removal of the Author from the presidency of Kenyon College* (1844).

be a clear-cut division of powers, a definite fixing of responsibility, if the energies of the president and, for that matter, of all in authority, were to be profitably and not wastefully employed. Even more important, however, than these mechanical arrangements was the personality of the man in charge. If the president possessed the capacity for relevant labor, a judicious mixture of aggressiveness and tact, and infinite adaptability, he might make headway even under adverse conditions; lacking these qualities, the most perfect charter and most generous board of trustees were not likely to save him from failure. Scholarship and specialized knowledge were of relatively little consequence; balance, sanity, address, " all-round " ability—these were the qualities that made for success. When the Rev. Elihu Baldwin of New York was being considered for the presidency of Wabash College, one of his brethren listed his qualifications for that position in the following descending order of importance: peacemaker in church wrangles, ready in address, hard worker, loud voice, some teaching experience, adequate scholarship. Baldwin was elected.[1]

[1] Hatfield, *op. cit.*, p. 302.

CHAPTER III

The Educator

"It shall be the duty of the President to take charge of the College generally."[1] In this sweeping assertion the trustees of Columbia College indicated to their chief executive the well-nigh boundless responsibilities of his office. At Princeton the general superintendence was committed to the president with the additional caution that he promote the "interests and reputation" of the college "by every exertion in his power".[2] In similar phrases, that occur over and over in the laws and statutes of the various institutions, the trustees of the early American colleges clearly affirmed the traditional position of the president as the one man ultimately responsible for everything that affected the reputation of the school and the well-being of its students. He controlled and represented the campus world; with him the college stood and fell. The *videant consules* of ancient Rome contained nothing more exacting or far-reaching, within their sphere, than the duties marked out in these instructions; to face them with equanimity demanded a courageous soul.

Practically the president's duties resolved themselves into problems of administration, supervision and instruction. The first of these having been treated in the previous chapter, it is the purpose here to discuss the last two, and to describe the traditional and generally prevalent methods of supervision and instruction.

[1] *Statutes of Columbia College* (1811), ch. i.

[2] *Laws of the College of New Jersey* (1802), ch. ii.

The old college was a patriarchal establishment. The age of the students corresponded rather to that of high school pupils than of college men of today. A boy entered at the age of fourteen or fifteen and graduated, four years later, before he was full-grown.[1] This fact alone was enough to make any attempt at student self-government a dubious experiment; when coupled with a home and preparatory school training that made much of honoring father and mother, but said little of education for democracy, it led inevitably to a regime that resembled nothing so much as a benevolent parental despotism. Quite unconsciously, it seems, President Willard of Harvard addressed every student who came to him with the same words: "Well child, what do you want?"[2] It was Willard, too, who saw fit to correct a student in the middle of his commencement oration for mis-

[1] Occasional references in college laws, as well as statements in numerous biographies of college presidents and college graduates bear this out. To cite a few examples: at the University of Georgia the minimum age of admission, which had been thirteen, was raised to sixteen in the thirties. E. M. Coulter, *College Life in the Old South* (New York, 1928), p. 47. When the University of Michigan was established the entrance age was fixed at fourteen. E. M. Farrand, *History of the University of Michigan* (Ann Arbor, 1885), p. 68. The same limit was in force at Knox College as late as 1863. *Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Students.* A student graduating at Indiana in 1826, at the age of seventeen, was not the youngest in his class. David D. Banta, *History of Indiana University* (*Indiana University 1820-1920, Centennial Memorial Volume*, Bloomington, Ind., 1921), p. 28. Of the first eight students to enroll at Bowdoin, seven were under sixteen, and one was only thirteen. Louis C. Hatch, *The History of Bowdoin College* (Portland, Me., 1927), p. 21. Josiah Quincy the younger, who attended Harvard from 1817-1821, remarked that the average age at entrance was fifteen, and that some freshmen were only twelve. *Figures of the Past* (Boston, 1892), p. 23. President Nott of Union referred to new students on one occasion as boys of fourteen, and Wayland of Brown similarly refers to them. Nott, Ms. of senior course; F. and H. L. Wayland, *A Memoir of the Life and Labors of Francis Wayland* (2 vols., New York, 1867), vol. i, p. 260.

[2] Biography in W. B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit* (9 vols., New York, 1857-69), vol. ii, p. 23.

pronouncing a Latin word.[1] The student's life was that of a soldier in a barracks. He had a fixed time for rising and retiring, ate at stated hours, and was required to spend certain periods of the day in study. An elaborate set of rules governed his conduct and regulated his entire existence; the trustees formulated these, the president and faculty enforced them, and tutors, stationed in the dormitories, ferreted out offenders.

A few glimpses of college rules will illustrate the extent of this supervision. The Laws of Union College in 1802 consisted of eleven chapters of from seven to twenty-three sections each.[2] Every student was required to have a copy and to familiarize himself with its contents. Besides prescribing entrance requirements, fees, and courses of study, the laws mapped out a program of activities that filled almost every hour of the student's day. There were morning and evening prayers, an early morning study period and another later in the day, and two principal recitation periods: one in the forenoon and one in the afternoon. This arrangement left three free stretches: from breakfast to the morning study hour, from noon to two, and from evening prayers to nine in the summer, and to seven in the fall and winter terms. Attendance at classes and prayers, as well as at church on Sundays, was compulsory. On the index of prohibited activities were card-playing, swearing, drunkenness, striking instructors or locking them in their rooms. To secure prompt obedience the president and the professors lived in the college buildings with their families, supervised the students at meals and marched them to church. "Perhaps no college" — that is the verdict of the president of

[1] Joseph H. Jones, ed., *The Life of Ashbel Green* (New York, 1849), p. 234.

[2] A. V. Raymond, *Union University* (3 vols., New York, 1907), vol. i, p. 83 *et seq.*

Union, Eliphalet Nott—" has ever furnished such complete security to the manners and morals of youth, or a course more likely to ensure a thorough education." [1] On a number of these points Nott was to experience a change of heart before the close of his long administration.

Union was typical; a similar regime prevailed in most of the colleges. Early rising—five o'clock chapel was not unusual—,[2] attendance upon prayers and classes, and observance of study hours, were generally demanded. Joint meals in the " commons " were an additional feature. Dancing, theatres and games of chance were almost universally taboo. Western and southern colleges found it expedient to enlarge the lists of prohibitions by including horse-racing, dueling and carrying of weapons.[3] William and Mary qualified the prohibition of liquor: " except in that moderation, which becomes the prudent and industrious student ".[4] The lesser virtues of good manners and courtesy were not overlooked. Princeton students, at any rate before the Revolution, were instructed to raise their hats to the president at a distance of ten rods and to tutors at five; [5] and the trustees of Transylvania resolved that students should not lean on one another

[1] Letter to his brother, cited in C. Van Santvoord, *Memoirs of Eliphalet Nott* (New York, 1876), p. 120.

[2] A faculty ruling at Amherst in 1833 called for morning prayers at 4.45 in summer and 5.45 in winter. Here too discipline was secured by an elaborate system of fines. In their enthusiasm the faculty even voted to fine themselves for neglect of duty, but apparently thinking better of it they later rescinded this self-denying ordinance. W. S. Tyler, *A History of Amherst College* (New York, 1895), p. 81.

[3] *The Laws of Georgetown College* (Georgetown, Ky., 1850), p. 12. Laws of Miami University in 1842, in A. H. Upham, *Old Miami* (Hamilton, O., 1909), p. 41. Kemp P. Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina* (Raleigh, N. C., 1907), vol. i, p. 44.

[4] " Statutes of the College in 1792 ", *William and Mary Quarterly Historical Magazine*, vol. xx, p. 1.

[5] V. L. Collins, *Princeton* (New York, 1914), ch. v, *passim.*

during recitations.[1] The University of Georgia, lest any thing essential be omitted, concluded sixteen pages of rules with an elastic clause: since these laws are few and general, the faculty shall use discretion in all cases not covered.[2]

To secure respect for this formidable array of laws and to mete out adequate punishment to offenders was largely, and in some cases entirely, the task of the president. Several approved courses of action were open to him. In earlier days a system of graduated fines, proportioned to the gravity of the offense, seems to have been the favorite method of enforcing submission. The laws of Union, cited above, provided an elaborate series of fines, ranging from four cents for cutting chapel to three dollars for drunkenness, and supplemented in the case of chronic or extreme offenders by expulsion. At Harvard in President Kirkland's day a student who went to a party in Boston was fined five dollars, and a visit to the theatre was punished with a fine of ten dollars.[3] Writing to his mother from Bowdoin during his undergraduate days, Nathaniel Hawthorne confessed on one occasion that he had been caught playing cards for money and fined fifty cents by the president. He would be careful, he assured her, not to repeat the offense, for that would bring suspension.[4]

The obvious defects of such a mechanical method of dealing with youthful offenders were being recognized, however, and fines were eventually restricted to purely technical violations or else done away with altogether. President Nott was one of the first to protest against the evils of the system and to supplant it at Union with more human relations.

[1] R. and J. Peter, *Transylvania University* (Louisville, 1896), p. 92.

[2] E. M. Coulter, *College Life in the Old South* (New York, 1928), p. 81.

[3] Josiah Quincy, *Figures of the Past* (Boston, 1892), p. 23.

[4] Letter of May 30, 1822, quoted in George E. Woodberry, *Nathaniel Hawthorne* (Boston, 1902), p. 19.

Timothy Dwight, too, recognized its viciousness and abolished fines at Yale.[1] William and Mary made much of the honor system. The student's relation to the authorities there is described as follows: "He comes to us as a gentleman. As such we receive and treat him. . . . He is not harassed with petty regulations; he is not insulted and annoyed by impertinent surveillance." A faculty law of 1830 bears this out. If a student, so reads the law, "shall deny on his Honor as a Gentleman the offence . . . . such denial shall be taken as conclusive evidence of his innocence."[2]

Another method of checking the students' conduct was that of merit and demerit marks, a convenient arrangement which enabled presidents and faculties, by simply adding marks, to determine objectively every student's standing at the end of the term. Every misstep was charged against him, every meritorious act counted to his credit, and the balance at the end of the year left no doubt as to where he stood. When faculty members at Harvard were accused of favoritism in bestowing graduation honors, President Quincy devised a system of merits, over which he kept book, and which told him with mathematical certainty who was entitled to honors.[3] In many institutions these various artificial and mechanical devices were supplemented by, or discarded in favor of, a simple series of admonitions, culminating in suspension or expulsion. At Georgetown in Kentucky, for example, the first disciplinary measure was a private admonition by the president or an instructor in whose presence the offense had been committed; this was followed if necessary by

[1] Timothy Dwight, *Travels in New-England and New-York* (4 vols., London, 1823), vol. i, p. 180.

[2] The description is contained in an address by Judge Tucker in 1834. *William and Mary College Quarterly*, vol. xviii, p. 3. The faculty law is found *ibid.*, vol. xiv, p. 3.

[3] Edmund Quincy, *Life of Josiah Quincy of Massachusetts* (Boston, 1867), p. 440.

a public denunciation of the culprit before his class, then before the student-body; if the pressure was still unavailing, probation followed and, in extreme cases, expulsion.[1] Between the last two steps some colleges, like Harvard and Yale, inserted temporary suspension, or rustication,[2] while others again distinguished between ordinary and public, infamous expulsion.[3] James Russell Lowell was rusticated for two months during his senior year at Harvard, and upon his return, shortly before graduation, was examined in Locke and other philosophical treatises that he had been ordered to study during his exile.[4]

Such was the disciplinary machinery which the president might expect to find when he entered office and which he was expected to operate. That the machinery creaked goes without saying. The cold, impersonal formalism of such a routine was bound to be galling to adolescents who required sympathy and human contacts. The pomp and solemnity of a faculty hearing might overawe the guilty, but was not likely to win their confidence. The best of them found the yoke at times unbearable. If conscientious observance of every regulation makes one a model student Julian Sturtevant was one, for during his entire stay at Yale he never intentionally transgressed a rule, and yet even he was forced to confess that such rigors as early morning chapel were a burden rather than an inspiration: "I was always punctual in attendance upon these early exercises, but it was impossible for me to derive any benefit from them. It was simply a matter of endurance."[5] And not all were

[1] *The Laws of Georgetown College* (1850).

[2] Dwight, *loc. cit.*

[3] *By-Laws of the Transylvania University* (Lexington, Ky., 1818), ch. iv.

[4] Horace E. Scudder, *James Russell Lowell* (2 vols., Boston, 1901), vol. i, p. 47.

[5] Julian M. Sturtevant, *Autobiography* (New York, 1896), p. 84 and *passim.*

as conscientious as Sturtevant. He himself said that while the student-body of Yale at his time was decent in the main, there were always numerous rowdies stirring up trouble.[1] One did not have to be a congenital rowdy however to chafe under the rigid regime, for it was so confining that smoldering resentment could always be roused. As a result, violations of rules were the order of the day. Very often, to be sure, such violations were nothing more than horseplay and pranks of the kind that old graduates like to recall and embellish, and that grow more elaborate with each alumni dinner. But all too frequently they took the form of open insubordination and concerted uprisings against the constituted authorities. Those colleges were few and far between that did not boast of at least one first-class riot. So numerous and so wide-spread are the accounts of such occurrences that even when taken with a grain of salt they indicate a condition of affairs in most colleges that approached chronic anarchy.[2]

Painting the president's horse, tying his cow in the chapel, smoking tutors out of their rooms, and similar inanities date back no one knows how far. Nor was such disorderly conduct confined to the small provincial institutions of the frontier. A crockery battle in the Harvard commons in 1817 between freshmen and sophomores ended only when all the dishes had been smashed.[3] The college fire department went to pieces about the same time because its members drank too much "black strap".[4] Vandalism assumed such proportions in 1834 that President Quincy threatened a grand jury investigation.[5] At the Yale commencement of 1847 a

[1] Sturtevant, *op. cit.*, pp. 91, 94.

[2] "Autocracy tempered by rebellion" it is called in *The American College* (New York, 1915).

[3] Josiah Quincy, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 39.

[5] Edmund Quincy, *op. cit.*, pp. 464 *et seq.*

visitor was shocked by the wanton destruction that he witnessed. "I saw many of the graduating class breaking the glass in their rooms. Very dignified and honorable beginning of the world for them." [1] A riot in Princeton in 1807, under the otherwise capable regime of Samuel Stanhope Smith, led to the expulsion of 125 of the 200 students.[2] And this was not the last disturbance there.

When such "extra-curricular activities" occurred in the newer southern and western institutions, they were perhaps more lurid and spectacular. The remoteness and isolation of some of these small colleges may have been a principal cause in that it offered no normal outlet for the animal energy of growing boys. When one hears the promoters of Kenyon College recommend the latter for its accessibility, since it was only six miles from a stage line and scarcely twenty-five from the National Road,[3] one can imagine the life in the remoter seats of learning. This factor helps to explain the excesses that were perpetrated; on the frontier the acquisition of culture was a painful process. During Andrew Dickson White's undergraduate days at Hobart professors were buried under mattresses, and tutors badly burned by heated cannon-balls rolling down the corridors. President Hale at one time escaped from the classroom through a window and down a ladder; on another occasion he was kept at bay by a shower of beer-bottles.[4] White found more carousing in Hobart than in a half-dozen of the largest American and European universities that he came to know later, and as a result became sceptical of the

[1] Theo. Myers Riley, *A Memorial Biography of the Very Reverend Augustus Hoffman* (New York, 1904), p. 75.

[2] Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

[3] Philander Chase, *A Plea for the West* (Philadelphia, 1826).

[4] *Autobiography of Andrew Dickson White* (2 vols., New York, 1905), vol. i, p. 18 *et seq.*

"direct Christian influence" of small church colleges. Students of Miami University in Ohio blockaded lecture halls and homes after a heavy snowfall and brought college activities to a complete standstill.[1] In North Carolina they rode horses through the dormitory and "shot up" the place generally. At a great drinking bout, attended by students and faculty, that signalized the celebration of Washington's birthday in 1804, a young instructor, according to a student's letter, achieved the feat of getting drunk twice.[2] Shooting, blocking stagecoaches, and singing ribald songs in front of churches are reported from the University of Virginia. Students here went even further and on occasion assaulted and whipped members of the faculty. In the course of the riot of 1842 Professor Davis was shot and killed by an exuberant undergraduate.[3] A similar outrage was the murder of President Jeremiah Chamberlin of Oakland College in Mississippi. During the political excitement attendant upon the discussion of the Compromise of 1850 a drunken student, enraged over a fancied injury, stabbed him to death.[4]

Even when assured of the support of the faculty and the trustees, the president was apt to have his hands full in trying to cope with every difficult situation that arose. As a rule such support seems to have been forthcoming, for the powers that be must be vindicated, and more than one student revolt dashed itself to pieces against the united front of the authorities. But not always. The faculty might be quite

[1] Sketch of President McMaster in Tobey and Thompson, *The Diamond Anniversary Volume* (of Miami University, Hamilton, O., 1899), p. 130 and *passim*.

[2] Battle, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 199, 452.

[3] Phil. A. Bruce, *History of the University of Virginia* (5 vols., New York, 1920), vol. ii, p. 309 and *passim*.

[4] Sprague, *Annals*, vol. iv, p. 590.

useless, or the board recalcitrant. In the early struggling years of the University of North Carolina the twenty-four-year-old president, Joseph Caldwell, had associated with him a faculty consisting of a French ex-monk, a deserter from the British navy, and a strolling player.[1] Little cooperation was to be expected from such a crew, who, besides, were not above going on an occasional spree with the undergraduates.

In the smaller colleges especially, discipline was further complicated by the need of placating influential patrons, for in these schools a handful of students and a half-dozen tuition fees might be the margin of financial solvency. President Nisbet of Dickinson constantly complained of the interference of trustees in the management of the college. The trustees, he maintained, were not interested in learning, but in show and large numbers, and accordingly brought pressure to bear upon faculty and president.[2] Andrew D. White accounted for the anarchy at Hobart on the same grounds: the authorities could not afford to expel wealthy scoundrels for fear of losing the support of their parents.[3] In his last report to the trustees of the University of Alabama President Basil Manly mentioned indulgent wealthy parents along with the alleged laziness of Southern youth as a chief difficulty that his administration had successfully overcome.[4] Philip Lindsley of the University of Nashville took the bull by the horns when he plainly told his audience in a commencement address in 1848 that the difficulties under which the college was laboring, and about which he had had numerous complaints, were largely due to parental interference with his dis-

[1] Battle, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 160.

[2] Letter to Earl of Buchan, 15 Dec., 1785. Cited in Samuel Miller, *Memoir of the Rev. Charles Nisbet* (New York, 1840), p. 139.

[3] A. D. White, *loc. cit.*

[4] Thomas M. Owen, "Dr. Basil Manly, the Founder of the Alabama Historical Society", in *Alabama Historical Society Reprint No. 5* (Montgomery, 1904).

cipline. When stupid lazy boys failed of promotion, took to mischief, were punished and finally sent home, all in the interests of good order and high standards, the authorities were immediately attacked by irate parents. "The son is a high-minded, honorable, brave, generous, good-hearted young gentleman; who scorns all subterfuge and meanness, and who would not lie for the universe! Not he. In this particular at least, he is above suspicion; and, like the Pope, infallible. While the Faculty are a parcel of paltry pedants, pedagogues, bigots, charlatans—without feeling, spirit, kindness, honesty, or common sense." [1]

Considerable popularity was enjoyed by the manual-labor schools of the thirties. A number of institutions adopted this plan of management in order to kill two birds with one stone, by helping the student finance his college career and at the same time seeking to solve the vexing problem of discipline. Every student in such a college was required to spend two or more hours a day at manual labor either on the college farm or else in specially constructed workshops, and was paid for his labor. Besides enabling poor boys to earn at least part of their tuition money, the plan was hailed as a way out of most of the president's difficulties, for on the principle that the devil finds work for idle hands to do, steady occupation ought to be the best deterrent against mischief and insubordination. The president's task was thus greatly simplified. Examples of manual-labor colleges were Mercer in Georgia, Davidson in North Carolina, Randolph-Macon in Virginia, Marietta and Oberlin in Ohio and Knox in Illinois.[2]

[1] *Speech about Colleges* (Nashville, Tenn., 1848), p. 9.

[2] *Bureau of Education Circular of Information No. 4*, 1888, p. 64; *The Works of Stephen Olin* (2 vols., New York, 1852), vol. ii, pp. 271, 303; *The Addresses and Proceedings connected with the Semi-Centennial Celebration of Marietta College* (1885); C. R. Shaw, *Davidson College* (New York, 1923), p. 39; *Laws and Regulations of the Oberlin Collegiate Institute* (Oberlin, O., 1840).

But the system did not fulfill its promise. For one thing it was uneconomical, since the president could not manfacture jobs, and students could not be paid unless there was a demand for their labor and products. Then, too, the hours spent in shop and field reduced the time available for intellectual activities and thereby tended to lower the standards of achievement. The institution was eventually criticized as being one-sided, crowding out the important studies from the curriculum and, in general, as falling far short of the goal sought.[1] An alumnus of a manual-labor school stated the case more bluntly. He and his fellows had come to college to study; they were not at all anxious to " make brooms and barrels for the salvation of their souls ".[2]

Rules and systems served their purpose, in fact it is difficult to see how the larger schools especially could have done without them, yet far more important than all disciplinary regulations was the person of the president who gave them effect. The use that he made of the rules, the interpretation that he placed upon them, the exceptions that he allowed, the ease with which he could rise above them, these were the factors that determined not only the outward order and discipline, but the life and spirit of a college. The mediocre president was a slave of the college laws; the great one was their master. Eliphalet Nott had been at Union but a short time before he discovered the viciousness of the system in vogue there. Describing those early days, he said, " Fines, suspensions, and expulsions were the principal instruments of college government. The Faculty sat in their robes as a court; caused offenders to be brought before them; examined witnesses, and pronounced sentences with the solemnity of

[1] *Quarterly Register and Journal of the American Education Society,* vol. vi, no. 1.

[2] Address of President Tuttle of Wabash, a former student of Marietta, in *The Addresses and Proceedings connected with the Semi-Centennial Celebration of Marietta College.*

other courts of justice".[1] He waited until the first faculty resolution expelling a student had been reversed by the trustees, and thereupon changed the entire procedure. He "determined never again to convene the faculty on a question of discipline",[2] but began to treat offenders personally, and very successfully, by methods best known to himself. He had pressure exerted upon the culprit by the latter's classmates or family. "He had studied every individual in the class, and could readily decide as to the kind of moral artillery that could be brought to bear on each. He knew exactly how to adapt himself to the fears of the cowardly, the bluster of the vain, the moral or religious principle of the conscientious."[3]

By similar methods Timothy Dwight, one of the most famous of all the presidents, governed Yale. While the graduated punishments from admonition to expulsion were maintained, they were applied in a different spirit. Fines were abolished, opportunities for personal contacts increased, and the students treated as gentlemen.[4] Dwight's successor, Jeremiah Day, proceeded on the principle that there must be just enough government to be effective, but not so much as to become oppressive. "All displays of authority, all discipline proceeding from the love of power is to be scrupulously avoided."[5] Men like Kirkland and Quincy of Harvard are pictured as courteous and considerate rulers. In advocating —and practicing—a form of government characterized by leniency, few rules, and attention to the individual student,

[1] Letter written in 1860, cited in Van Santvoord, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

[2] Address, cited *ibid.*, p. 149.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 173.

[4] Dwight, *loc. cit.* *Cf.* also the memoir of Dwight in *Theology Explained and Defended* (4 vols., New Haven, 1843), *passim.*

[5] Quoted in Theodore Dwight Woolsey, "An Address Commemorative of the Life and Services of Jeremiah Day". Reprinted from *New Englander* for Oct., 1867.

President Leonard Woods of Bowdoin lost the support of his faculty, who insisted upon rigid observance of the letter of the law. The trustees finally restored a measure of harmony, and from then on the punishments usually represented a compromise between the "holy indignation of the Professors and the human sympathies of the President." [1]

Francis Wayland described the problems that confronted him at Brown and the methods he employed to establish satisfactory relations between officers and students.

> The first business which I undertook was to frame a new set of laws for the college. . . . It made a vastly greater amount of labor necessary for both officers and students. The design was to render study not a sham, but a reality, and discipline not a form, but a fact. The previous method of recitation by question and answer was abolished, and, except in the teaching of languages, neither officers nor students used a book in the class. Officers were to occupy apartments in college during the day and evening, and were to visit the rooms of students at least twice during the twenty-four hours. Spirituous liquors, which had been commonly in use, were banished from the college premises. [Before this, a barrel of ale had always been on tap in the cellar.] A system of marks was devised, by which a parent could know the standing of his son at the close of every term. Power was given to the president to send away from college any young man whose conduct rendered him an improper associate for his fellow-students, or whose further connection with his class would be of no use to himself or to his friends. . . . The design was to render the college a place of real study and improvement; to establish the existence of authority on the part of the officers, and of obedience on the part of the students, but all in the spirit of love and good will. The requirements for admission had been greatly relaxed. These were raised to the standard of New England colleges generally, and it was understood that they would be strictly enforced.[2]

[1] Hatch, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

[2] Wayland, *Memoir*, vol. i, p. 205.

Many executives deprecated with Stephen Olin of Randolph-Macon the need for rules and punishments, but they saw no alternative under existing conditions.[1] Others used strong-arm methods to drive the fear of God into their charges. Joseph Caldwell of North Carolina is reported to have taken nightly walks to catch offenders red-handed.[2] John McLean of Princeton did the same, even chasing them to their rooms and up trees.[3] President Bishop of Miami combined a fiery temper with a keen sense of propriety. In chapel he prayed " with one eye open ". When he saw a disturbance he would make a flying leap from the platform on to the back of the unfortunate offender, reduce him to submission, and calmly return to the rostrum and continue praying.[4] President Matthew Brown, of Jefferson in Pennsylvania, described as a genial and paternal ruler, suspended four and expelled fourteen of a total student-body of eighty, all in one day.[5] Thus by one means or another the resourceful president met the situations that confronted him and usually managed to keep the upper hand. There were always those, of course, who failed altogether, either from lack of support or through a temperamental defect. Unsympathetic public opinion was the cause of Horace Holley's resignation at Transylvania, and President Douglass, a layman, was forced out of office at Kenyon because he showed too little regard for the wishes of the clerical management. Then there were men like Green of Princeton and McMaster of Miami who were constantly in trouble because they failed, in the goodness

[1] Inaugural address, in *The Works of Stephen Olin* (2 vols., New York, 1852), vol. ii, p. 271.

[2] Battle, vol. i, p. 225.

[3] Collins, ch. iv, *passim*.

[4] *Correspondence of Thomas Ebenezer Thomas* (1909), p. 48. Thomas was a friend and admirer of Bishop.

[5] Sprague, *Annals*, vol. iv, p. 256.

of their hearts, to appreciate the full degree of original sin that the average undergraduate carried about with him.

While the maintenance of order took up a great deal of the president's time and energy, it was only one of his educational functions. He was also expected to teach. Beginning with Dunster of Harvard, the American college presidents were classroom instructors. College laws and catalogs show this to have been an almost universal rule. President and professor of moral philosophy, or of religion, or the classics, is the title one generally finds in the catalogs.[1] Sometimes the subjects he was to teach were designated by the trustees, but more often he was permitted to choose his field. Statements like the following are encountered: "He [the president] will take such branches of instruction into his own hands, as he may judge that the number of other teachers and the exigencies of the institution shall render necessary and expedient."[2] When the number of other teachers was small the president's courses were varied and numerous, but once the size and wealth of an institution warranted the creation of additional chairs, he might eventually confine himself to the subject in which he was primarily interested. Mention was made in an earlier chapter of presidents who taught without assistance everything the curriculum offered. As courses multiplied and numbers increased, the growing administrative burden in time made it necessary for the heads of the larger colleges to give up teaching altogether and limit themselves to strictly executive duties. But this development lies almost wholly beyond the period covered by the present treatise.

Classroom procedure was simple. Laboratory and source methods, projects and problems—these things had not yet

[1] Biographies and college histories tell the same story.

[2] *Laws of the University of Nashville in Tennessee* (1835), ch. ii, par. 4.

come to plague the pedagogue. On one day the instructor imparted information and on the next the pupils handed it back to him. If a text was available, the president enlarged on that, the class being held responsible both for the material in the book and the instructor's comments upon it. In the absence of a suitable text the president would dictate the lectures and perhaps eventually bring them out as his own text. Smith of Princeton, Wayland of Brown, Mahan of Oberlin and Dagg of Mercer published their class lectures. Timothy Dwight described his method of procedure at Yale as follows:

> The senior class recites once a day to the president. All the classes are made responsible for the manner in which they hear, and remember the lectures; being examined at every lecture concerning their knowledge of the preceding; and accordingly are all furnished with note books, in which they take down at the time the principal subjects of every lecture.[1]

Nott's course at Union and Smith's at Princeton were apparently conducted in a similar manner.[2] It was but natural that the scores of later presidents who had their academic training at Yale, Princeton or Union should follow the example of their teachers and shape their practices accordingly.[3] A class hour with President Wayland of Brown, who admittedly copied Nott, his teacher, began with the recitation of the previous day's lecture. This completed, Wayland dictated the new lesson, enlivening this routine with illustrations, anecdotes and occasional informal discussions.[4] In President Walker's class at Harvard each student recited

[1] In a general description of Yale activities, *Travels in New-England and New-York*, vol. i, p. 167 *et seq.*

[2] *Cf. infra*, ch. iv.

[3] Biographies and college histories bear this out.

[4] Wayland, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 245. This apparently met the standards he had set up; *cf. supra*, p. 91.

about a page of the previous assignment and the president then explained the difficult parts.[1] The same procedure is indicated in Thomas Dew's question-and-answer syllabus for the history course that he gave at William and Mary.[2] In short, wherever one turns, lecture-recitation was the accepted formula.

The range of subjects from which the president might choose his courses was not large. Dunster's curriculum, which he had brought from Cambridge, continued with few material changes as the standard in most American colleges beyond the middle of the nineteenth century. Dunster himself tersely summarized it as follows: *Primus annus Rhetoricam docebit, secundus et tertius Dialecticam, quartus adiungat Philosophiam.*[3] By the first quarter of the nineteenth century this had come to mean a curriculum consisting normally of four chief divisions, the classics, rhetoric and belles-lettres, mathematics and natural philosophy, mental and moral philosophy. Greek and Latin, the backbone of the course, engaged the students for three years; rhetoric and mathematics were given in the first two years; natural philosophy—that is, the rudiments of physics and chemistry—usually came in the third; and the philosophical studies, logic, metaphysics, ethics, together with lectures on the evidences

[1] "An Undergraduate's Diary", *Harvard Graduates' Magazine*, vol. xxi, pp. 83, 84.

[2] *Cf. infra*, p. 106, footnote.

[3] He also gives the requirements for the A. B. degree: Quicumque scholaris, probatione habita, poterit sacras utriusque Instrumenti Scripturas de Textu Originali Latine interpretari et logice resolvere, fueritque naturalis et moralis philosophiae principiis imbutus, vitaque et moribus inculpatus, et publicis quibusvis Comitiis ab Inspectoribus et Praeside Collegii approbatus, primo suo gradu possit ornari: alias nullus expectabit, nisi qui quadrennium in collegio transegerit, in quo inculpate vitam degerit, et omnia exercitua publica sedula observarit.

L. F. Snow, *The College Curriculum in the United States* (1907), p. 22.

of Christianity, filled the fourth. To this stock matter might be added a few lectures on geography and history—then more often called chronology—, a bit of experimental chemistry, and the beginnings of economics and political science.[1] Now and then an innovation was tried, but in the main the colleges of New England and the middle Atlantic states adhered to the traditional curriculum, and their graduates carried it on to the new schools of the West and South. Princeton and Yale, the two most conservative institutions during this period, furnished more presidents to younger colleges than any other of the original colonial colleges. Of the presidents of seventy-five colleges in operation before 1840 thirty-six were graduates of Yale, twenty-two of Princeton.[2] Throughout the land therefore, from New England to Georgia and the trans-Appalachian wilds, the course described above was the standard, the royal road to culture and intellectual leadership. Blount College in Tennessee was chartered in 1795 and put into operation as soon as its president, the Rev. Samuel Carrick, had a respite from the more urgent business of shooting Indians. Yet in this environment the first young backwoods graduate was examined in "Virgil, Rhetoric, Horace, Logic, Geography, Greek Testament, Lucien [sic], Mathematics, Ethics, and Natural Philosophy".[3]

Small wonder then that this sacrosanct course of study was upheld as the ideal, the *ultima ratio,* and defended against all assaults from within and without. When Joseph

[1] *Ibid., passim. The Quarterly Register* gives a list of twenty leading colleges with their courses of study in 1828, vol. i, p. 228. College laws and catalogs are of course the basic source.

[2] The others in descending order are: Union 13, Brown 12, Dickinson 10, Dartmouth 9, Harvard 8 and the remainder scattering.

[3] Edward T. Sanford, *Blount College and the University of Tennessee* (Knoxville, 1894), p. 22.

Caldwell came down from Princeton as first professor of the University of North Carolina he found a liberal curriculum in force, containing an unusual amount of science as well as history and political economy, and providing for electives. For this plan, the work of local leaders, he gradually substituted the traditional course as he had learned it at his alma mater, until at the end of his long administration—he was in charge, with a brief interruption, from 1797 to 1835—North Carolina was thoroughly committed to the accepted order of things.[1] Symbolical of the extreme veneration for the old course and especially for the classics were the ceremonies at the founding of Allegheny College in Pennsylvania in 1817. On this occasion a chip off Plymouth Rock, a bit of marble from Dido's temple, and a piece of plaster from the tomb of Virgil were encased in the cornerstone. At the first commencement exercises there was an address in Latin by a citizen of the town, to which President Alden responded in Latin; there followed another Latin oration, a Hebrew oration, a Latin dialogue, and an English dialogue.[2] And this in a frontier town of seven hundred people! The contents of the orations probably mattered little; their significance lay in the fact that they proclaimed the intellectual kinship of the new community with the older centers of learning. Allegheny wanted to show its constituents that it deserved their support, for it too could speak the language of Harvard and Yale.[3]

[1] Battle, vol. i, pp. 95, 98.

[2] George R. Crooks, *The Life of Bishop Matthew Simpson* (New York, 1890), p. 126. The librarian of Allegheny College has assured the writer that this account is authentic.

[3] Roman Catholic colleges, true to their religious and philosophical tradition, emphasized the same principles. Their curricula corresponded closely to those of the Protestant institutions. *Cf.* F. P. Cassidy, *Catholic College Foundations and Development in the United States 1677–1850* (Catholic University, Washington, D. C., 1924), pp. 86, 87.

As to the intrinsic value of the classics, the chief ingredient of the college course, there was considerable unanimity of opinion among the presidents, with the result that, since theirs was the deciding voice in such matters, the traditional curriculum nearly everywhere retained the ascendancy. Though they did not as a rule teach Latin and Greek, they were quite generally convinced of the superiority of these subjects to all others. Dwight quotes with approval the old classical curriculum in use at Yale. In contrast to it the fashionable education of wealthy Bostonians with its novels and music seems to him rather trivial. It does not make one think. "The sight of a classic author gives him [the young man of fashion] a chill; a lesson in Locke or Euclid, a mental ague." [1] "With the study or neglect of the Greek and Latin languages", says the Rev. John Mason, provost of Columbia, "sound learning flourishes or declines. It is now too late for ignorance, indolence, eccentricity or infidelity to dispute what has been ratified by the seal of ages." [2] In a commencement address in 1802 Jonathan Maxcy, then president of Brown, urged the pursuit of useful studies rather than abstractions that lead to "a kind of mental insanity" like that of Berkeley and Hume. The useful studies, in his estimation, are the existing classical and philosophical curriculum.[3] It was not however the usual thing for the protagonists of the classics to stress their utility, as Maxcy does. Most of them adopted the older view and pointed out their value as instruments of discipline. Of the great mass of defenders of the disciplinary theory F. A. P. Barnard, a later president of Columbia, may be singled out. According to Barnard the principle that education means discipline and the

[1] Dwight, *Travels*, vol. i, p. 473.

[2] Jacob Van Vechten, *Memoirs of John M. Mason* (New York, 1856), p. 239.

[3] Jonathan Maxcy, *Collegiate Addresses*, p. 65.

cultivation of the mental faculties is "too well established to leave room for further controversy".[1] In an extensive report to the trustees of the University of Alabama while a professor there, he elaborated this idea and supplemented it with a mass of contemporaneous expert opinion.[2] Faced with the problem of counteracting the growing influence of the University of Virginia with its electives and its wide range of long and short courses, he restated the traditional position. The object of education is to improve the mind, and this is best achieved by adhering to the old compulsory curriculum. The multiple choice and the "partial courses" that some Alabamans demand, in imitation of Virginia, will lower standards, give a pseudo-education, and create a "sort of educational guerilla regiment". In support of his position he cited the presidents of Rutgers, North and South Carolina, and Georgia, according to all of whom it would be a calamity to put the classics aside and degrade the colleges into homes for literary triflers.

Most of Barnard's arguments are derived from the famous Yale report of 1827 on the question of altering the course and restricting the dead languages.[3] Inspired and partly written by President Day, Barnard's teacher, this polemic was designed to put an end once for all to criticisms of the old system and attempts at radical innovation. Regarded in many quarters as the last word on the subject, its influence in the numerous Yale-bred and Yale-inspired college faculties can be imagined. Its argument is again the familiar one of mental discipline. The training of the mind

[1] *Improvements Practicable in American Colleges* (Hartford, Conn., 1856), p. 8.

[2] *Professor Barnard on Collegiate Education and College Government* (New York, 1855), *passim.*

[3] This report is found in *The American Journal of Science and Arts* (ed. Benj. Silliman), vol. xv.

is the chief aim of education, for American colleges are neither trade schools nor European universities. Mental training, however, is best achieved by means of the classics as heretofore. Though the authors reject the charges that Yale is static and reactionary, and admit the desirability of gradual, very gradual, progress, yet at the same time the general tenor of their argument is to the effect that the existing curriculum of Greek and Latin, mathematics, and philosophy is perfect and final. It should be required of every student; it needs no additions, will suffer no subtractions; and it will stand for all time.

Armed with this gospel of conservatism, the defenders of the old order presented a united front to the assaults of innovators like Nott and Wayland and the Virginia school, and succeeded in delaying the liberalization of the college curriculum until after the Civil War. Inaugural addresses and official pronouncements in all parts of the country echo and reecho the sentiments of the Yale faculty. Stephen Olin, prominent Methodist leader, advocated the time-honored course for Randolph-Macon because of its tendency "to enlarge, invigorate, and discipline the mind".[1] Matthew Simpson in his inaugural at DePauw made a similar appeal.[2] President Hale of Hobart asked that the old established course be retained, since it sharpened the mind and thus fitted men to play their part in the community.[3] Elihu Baldwin of Wabash invoked the study of the ancient languages to develop the students' powers to the highest point of efficiency.[4] A professor at Transylvania intimated that a student caught

[1] *Works*, vol. ii, p. 271.

[2] Crooks, *op. cit.*, p. 171 and appendix.

[3] Benjamin Hale, *A Baccalaureate Address ... at Geneva, Aug. 1, 1838* (Geneva, N. Y., 1838).

[4] Edwin F. Hatfield, *Patient Continuance in Well-Doing: A Memoir of Elihu W. Baldwin* (New York, 1843), p. 322.

with an interlinear translation of Cicero had better return to the plow.[1] Others no doubt uttered similar wishes without getting into the records. So imbued was President Tomlinson of Augusta College, in Kentucky, with the spirit of the classics that in preparing his speeches he is said to have changed words of Anglo-Saxon origin to corresponding Latin derivatives.[2] One of the most thoroughgoing champions of conservatism was Simeon North of Hamilton, who delivered an inaugural address on the subject, " The College System of Education ".[3] North, like the Yale Fellows, is entirely satisfied with things as he finds them. He wants no changes or innovations. For the existing curriculum is liberal, since it leads to any profession. It is regular and systematic, since it develops all faculties symmetrically. It is thorough, practical and popular, since it augments mental powers, disciplines the mind, and provides an educated professional class, which is what this country needs. Finally and above all it is Christian.

Results and accomplishments under this system no doubt varied greatly. Some presidents were scholars, imbued with real love of learning, who surrounded themselves with as capable a faculty as was to be secured; but others were less competent and merely repeated parrot-like the phrases they had heard in their college days. Comparative standards of achievement are difficult to determine as every school had its ups and downs, but it can be assumed that better work was done in the larger institutions located in older cultural centers than in the frontier log colleges. In addition to their remoteness and lack of educational facilities the latter were sometimes handicapped by the prolonged absence of the president

[1] The student protested and the case was heard by the trustees. Transylvania University Records (ms. copy) for June 23, 1801.

[2] Sprague, *Annals*, vol. vii, p. 706.

[3] *The College System of Education* (Utica, N. Y., 1839), *passim.*

or other members of the teaching staff, who were forced to travel in missionary enterprises or in search of money or students. Bishop Matthew Simpson, while a student at Madison College in western Pennsylvania, also taught the ancient languages, though only sixteen years old at the time. Whenever the professor was out of town Simpson took over the instruction in all of his classes. The philosophy professor of the same institution was out on circuit so much of the time that he made no pretense of keeping up a continuous course, but only stopped to deliver an occasional lecture.[1]

At the same time it must be remembered that a good deal of the work in all the colleges was routine, mechanical drill, and not much above the average of that of a modern high school. "Up to the close of the Civil War it [the American college] was mainly an institution of secondary education, with some anticipations of university studies toward the end of the course."[2] That is the verdict of Dean West of the Princeton graduate school. Virtually every college experienced occasional periods of stagnation, when under adverse conditions or mediocre presidents standards sagged, interest relaxed, and the school merely vegetated. Princeton and Columbia, to say nothing of Harvard and Yale, all suffered periods of depression. Smaller schools, on the other hand, enjoyed occasional eras of unusual achievement. Williams under Hopkins, Union under Nott, Transylvania under Holley, William and Mary under Dew, Virginia under Jefferson's first faculty probably achieved results comparable to the best. But more often the standards of a small College were measured in terms of the larger. Southern colleges would be compared to Virginia, Presbyterian institutions to Princeton, New England foundations to Harvard or Yale.

[1] Crooks, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

[2] "The American College", in *Education in the United States* (ed. Nicholas Murray Butler, 2 vols., Albany, N. Y., 1900), vol. ii, p. 211.

There were various " western Yales ", and it was a matter of gratification when a president was able, as was McMaster of Miami, to place a student in Yale without the loss of a year.

There is abundant evidence that standards were not everywhere as high as they might be. A graduation orator at Pennsylvania in 1807 had his whole speech furnished by a friend, and later found it verbatim in an old magazine.[1] Charles Nisbet, a scholarly divine from Scotland, found it very difficult even to approximate his ideals at Dickinson. In a speech to the students he characterized the age as " a time when the most false and absurd opinions have been current, prevalent, and even rampant. We mean these opinions which suppose that a liberal education may be attained in a very little time; that the study of the ancient languages is useless; that education may be completed in the space of a year ". He goes on to inveigh at length against the " absurdity and folly of all short roads to learning ".[2] On an earlier occasion he had complained about the trustees, who were not at all interested in high standards, but only in large numbers, and had intimated that their income from the diploma fees might have something to do with this. American parents, he said, did not know the difference between a college and an elementary school. In the end, the utter disregard of the independent Pennsylvania citizenry for the civilized European order of things wrung from him the dispairing comment: "Americans seem much more desirous that their affairs be managed by themselves than that they be well managed ".[3] Philip Lindsley's criticism of parents who tried to have scholastic requirements waived in their sons'

[1] *Autobiography of the Rev. Sam. H. Turner* (New York, 1863), pp. 15, 16.

[2] Samuel Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 139, 141.

interests was mentioned earlier in this chapter.[1] He also deplored the mushroom growth of small colleges in Tennessee, all claiming to be the equals of any eastern school, and at the same time "promising to work cheap; and to finish off and graduate, in double-quick time, and in the most approved style, all who may come to them".[2] Timothy Dwight, if a student's remark is to be believed, had more elastic standards in this respect than Lindsley. The boy in question described his assignment to a class in Yale as follows: "He [Dwight] advised me . . . . to enter the junior class, if my circumstances were easy, if not to enter the senior class."[3] In the Columbia report of 1808 on raising the standards the Rev. John Mason, later provost of that college, felt it necessary to warn the trustees, president and faculty against

> that most fruitless and mischievous experiment—the experiment of educating either the naturally stupid, or the incurably idle. A volume [continues the report] could not display the magnitude of the injuries inflicted upon letters, upon religion, upon morals, upon social prosperity under every form, through the protection granted to incapacity and sloth, by a timid indulgence, or a chimerical hope.[4]

Whatever the standards that prevailed in any institution, the president was largely responsible for them, as he did a considerable share of the teaching and had greater opportunity to influence the students than any other member of the faculty. While not many were in the position of Samuel Johnson of Columbia,[5] Hardenbergh of Rutgers,[6] or Sanders

[1] *Cf. supra*, p. 87. [2] *Speech about Colleges*, pp. 13, 14.

[3] Letter to Jared Sparks, in Herbert B. Adams, *The Life and Writings of Jared Sparks* (2 vols., Boston, 1893), vol. i, p. 45.

[4] *Statutes of Columbia College* for 1811.

[5] *A History of Columbia University* (ed. Brander Matthews, New York, 1904), ch. ii, *passim*.

[6] Wm. H. S. Demarest, *A History of Rutgers College* (New Brunswick, N. J., 1924), p. 162.

of Vermont, who taught every subject listed in the catalog, yet it was not unusual for the senior class at least to have the president as its only teacher. President Hector Humphreys' course at St. John's in Baltimore included fourteen lectures in political economy, twenty-seven in Latin and Greek literature, the same number in chemistry and geology, thirty-four in natural philosophy, and six in astronomy. Of this course an alumnus has left a vivid description:

> His [Humphreys'] work, while prodigious, was most painstaking and faithful. In chemistry, besides our recitations from the text-book, and his lectures, he carefully, in our presence, analysed soils, both qualitatively and quantitatively. He instructed us in experimental philosophy, and in practical composition and elocution; and from the most approved treatises of the day, we recited to him in Mineralogy and Geology, Evidences of Christianity, Moral and Intellectual Philosophy, Rhetoric and Logic. Under his instruction we studied Butler's Analogy, Kame's Elements of Criticism, Elementary Political Economy, and Kent's Commentaries on International Law and Jurisprudence of the United States. He taught us the use of the quadrant and how to find the latitude of a place by meridian observation, and its longitude by timesights and the chronometer. He discoursed to us on Astronomy and taught us to use the College telescope, and lectured upon most of the subjects above named, besides instructing us, in the junior and senior years, in the final courses of Latin and Greek, in which languages he was deeply versed, and in the beauties of whose literature he took great delight.[1]

The retrospect of thirty-five years may have blurred the details and heightened the effect of the picture, but even so this description indicates a course of such sweeping proportions that the most learned and versatile instructor today would be foolish to attempt it. That such a vast field could not

[1] Biographical sketch in *Commemoration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of St. John's College* (Baltimore, 1890), p. 97.

be mastered or developed in original ways, especially since it represented only a portion of the president's work, goes without saying. Mark Hopkins, one of the ablest college heads, apologized for not revising his class lectures for twenty-eight years and gave as a cause his many other activities:

> Add to these [class lectures], preaching; the administrative labor incident to my position; the publication of between forty and fifty pamphlets, and of a volume on the Evidences of Christianity, and it may not seem strange that when the years came round, as they seemed to, with increasing rapidity, I was only able to give the lectures as they were.[1]

But often the president was able to select and limit his field. Timothy Alden, an oriental scholar, established and filled the chair of oriental languages and ecclesiastical history at Allegheny;[2] Thomas Cooper at South Carolina chose political economy;[3] Josiah Meigs, who had taught mathematics and natural philosophy at Yale, continued these subjects after his accession to the presidency of Georgia;[4] Dwight at Yale and Nott at Union gave courses in belles-lettres and criticism;[5] one of the earliest real history courses was that given at William and Mary by President Dew.[6] All of these however

[1] *Lectures on Moral Science* (Boston, 1868), foreword.

[2] E. A. Smith, *Allegheny—A Century of Education* (Meadville, Pa., 1916), p. 15.

[3] Edwin L. Green, *A History of the University of South Carolina* (Columbia, S. C., 1916), ch. iii.

[4] Biographical sketch in *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*. *Cf.* also Wm. M. Meigs, *Life of Josiah Meigs* (Phila., 1887), *passim*.

[5] David L. Daggett kept notes of Dwight's lectures, in 1807. Nott's course is discussed in ch. 4.

[6] Thos. Dew, *A Digest of the Laws, Customs, Manners, and Institutions of the Ancient and Modern Nations* (New York, 1856).

This is a syllabus in question and answer form. It deals with social and intellectual factors as well as political. It indicates wide reading and appears to have been a "live" course.

were exceptional, for the vast majority selected for their field the group of philosophical subjects generally assigned to the senior year and designated in the catalogs as mental and moral philosophy. Sometimes the trustees demanded this selection, but whether taught from choice or compulsion this group seems always to have been a congenial subject. Coming as it did in the last college year, the many-sided moral philosophy course, with its broad sweep and flexible content, was admirably adapted to serve as a vehicle for whatever information and advice the president wished to transmit to his graduating classes. For an understanding of the college president as a cultural influence an analysis of the course in moral philosophy is indispensable.

CHAPTER IV

The Bearer of the Old Tradition

A universal feature of the curriculum in American colleges of the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth century was a course in moral philosophy. With its allied philosophical and social subjects it supplemented or more commonly replaced the classics and mathematics in the senior year.[1] Commonly known by the above-mentioned title, it is also referred to as moral science, intellectual philosophy, science of mind and morals, or simply as metaphysics and ethics. In its broadest extent the course included material from the fields of biology and psychology, of politics and economics, as well as of religion and ethics, with the emphasis resting, as the title indicates, upon the last-named. One of the first American textbooks of moral philosophy defines it as that science which gives rules for the direction of the will of man in his moral state, such rules to serve for the guidance of the individual, the community and the nation.[2]

Moral philosophy was a centuries-old course in the colleges; in fact, both in form and content it goes back to Aristotle. The selection of subject matter as well as the categories under which it is discussed are those of the Greek philosopher. Rediscovered by western Europe during the Middle Ages, Aristotelian thought and method fastened upon

[1] A large collection of college laws, programs and curricula is found in L. F. Snow, *The College Curriculum in the United States* (1907). Similar data for twenty colleges in 1828 are found in the *Quarterly Register and Journal* of the American Education Society, vol. i, p. 228.

[2] It was written by the Rev. John Daniel Gros of the Columbia College faculty.

the English and Scottish universities and—modified, to be sure, by the Renaissance and the Reformation—were carried thence to the colonial colleges in America. As early as 1640 President Dunster referred to moral philosophy as a prominent part of the course at Harvard, and the other two colonial colleges, William and Mary and Yale, carried it too.[1] Since the newer institutions, being staffed by graduates of the older, copied the methods and curricula of the latter, moral philosophy through sheer inertia became as common a feature of the average American college as the president's house and the treasury deficit.

With the founding of Pennsylvania, Princeton and Columbia in the middle of the eighteenth century more detailed information of the contents of the course becomes available. From these data it appears that its scope was being enlarged, especially by the addition of political, economic and sociological material. Thus the *Advertisement* of King's College in 1754 calls for instruction in " Metaphysics, Logic, and Moral Philosophy, with something of criticism and the chief principles of Law and Government ", an ideal whose partial fulfillment at least is indicated by the outline of the course as actually given, which is contained in the pamphlet of 1792: *The Present State of Learning in Columbia College.*[2] A wide variety of material was likewise included under the general head of moral philosophy at Pennsylvania. The course there, as outlined by Provost William Smith at the time the college was organized, touched the fields of ethics, law, history, government and economics.[3] Among the best sources of information as to the nature of the course at Princeton are the printed lectures of two early

[1] Snow, *op. cit., passim.*

[2] In addition to ethics the outline lists jurisprudence, general economy, government, and the law of nations as part of the course.

[3] Snow, p. 68; Provost Smith's program.

presidents, Witherspoon and Smith, which prove it to have been fully as broad and inclusive as those of Columbia or Pennsylvania.[1] Harvard created a chair of natural religion, moral philosophy and civil policy in 1789,[2] and a broadening of the course at Yale is likewise indicated by the substitution of Paley's more comprehensive text for the briefer treatises of Wollaston and Clap.[3] Evidence of a similar expansion at William and Mary ten years before is Thomas Jefferson's statement made in 1779: "We added the Law of Nature and of Nations and the Fine Arts to the duties of the moral professor", a remark that incidentally sheds further light on the flexibility of the course.[4]

Taught by the president in the senior year as the climax of the curriculum, moral philosophy maintained its position and its character in most colleges until the Civil War and after. In time, however, the subject slowly disintegrated into its component parts, as the advance in scientific knowledge raised its subdivisions to the dignity of separate subjects worth studying for their own sakes. Thus, to change the figure, the germs of political science, economics and psychology are all found in the parent course. But for the most part this development did not come until the nineteenth century was well under way. In 1821 for example Columbia was still grouping history of philosophy, intellectual and moral philosophy, and political economy under one head,[5]

[1] Witherspoon was president from 1768-1794, Smith from 1794-1812.

[2] It was not filled until 1817. *Quinquennial Catalogue*, 1636-1900.

[3] Snow, pp. 79, 129. Stiles' diary for Nov. 9, 1779. President Dwight also used Paley.

[4] Thomas Jefferson, *Memoir*, vol. i, p. 43. After Jefferson had tranferred his interests to the proposed University of Virginia, he mentioned as the topics that in his estimation ought to be included in such a course there: ideology, ethics, law of nature and of nations, government, political economy. Letter to Peter Carr, Sept. 7, 1814, in J. S. Patton, *Jefferson, Cabell, and the University of Virginia* (New York, 1906), p. 76.

[5] *Statutes of Columbia College*, March, 1821.

while the " moral professor " at Pennsylvania five years later was cramming logic, natural theology, philosophy of the human mind, metaphysics, and natural and political law into his course, and teaching composition and rhetoric in his spare moments.[1]

For origins and sources of subject matter it is necessary to look to England and Scotland, whose colleges naturally served as models for those of America. An English or a Scottish text generally formed the basis of class discussions and comments by the professor. There were however a few venturesome American educators who wrote their own texts. These range from small condensed syllabi intended only for classroom use to large extensive treatises destined eventually to reach the general public. The outstanding writers of the earlier period are Samuel Johnson, the first president of Columbia, Presidents Witherspoon and Smith of Princeton, and the Rev. John Daniel Gros, professor at Columbia in the 1790's. A later group of writers were President Francis Wayland of Brown, President Asa Mahan of Oberlin, President John R. Dagg of Mercer, and President Mark Hopkins of Williams.[2] In addition to the published works there are

[1] *Laws of the University of Pennsylvania,* 1826; Snow, 140.

[2] Samuel Johnson, *A System of Morality* (Boston, 1746). *Elementa Philosophica,* which included *A System of Morality* (Philadelphia, 1752). Though they appeared before the founding of Columbia, these works were intended as " little manuals of the science ... [that] would be of good use to young beginners." Preface.

John Daniel Gros (sometimes spelled Gross), *Natural Principles of Rectitude for the conduct of man ... in a systematic treatise on moral philosophy ...* (New York, 1795). Sabin calls this " the first treatise on moral philosophy written and published in America." But Johnson's text was earlier.

John Witherspoon, *Lectures on Moral Philosophy,* in his *Works* (Philadelphia, 1800). Re-edited with additional notes by V. L. Collins, Princeton, 1912.

Samuel Stanhope Smith, *The Lectures ... which have been delivered .... in the College of New Jersey, on the subjects of Moral and Political*

students' manuscript notes extant, based upon the oral lectures of various other presidents.

Worth mentioning among these lattter is a set of notes of the lectures of Provost Andrews of Pennsylvania in 1790.[1] Because of their clarity and logical consistency they may well serve as a brief introduction to the course as given at that time. They contain in small compass virtually every topic that is discussed in the larger works. After defining moral philosophy as the "science that teaches men their duty and the reasons of it," Andrews goes on to identify duty with the promotion of human happiness, and to classify it as duty toward humanity in general (ethics); toward the family (economics); toward the state (politics). Ethics again is subdivided into theoretical and practical. The former is based on the physical and mental equipment of man, and on the existence of God and of immortality, both of which are revealed by the light of nature as well as by Scriptures. Practical ethics is a discussion of the Aristotelian virtues of temperance, prudence, justice and fortitude. Economics includes such topics as marriage, duties of parents and children, property rights and slavery. Under the heading of politics,

Philosophy (two vols., Trenton, N. J., 1812). Smith was Witherspoon's son-in-law and immediate successor in office.

Francis Wayland, *The Elements of Moral Science* (New York, 1835). The outgrowth of lectures in which he first used Paley, but with growing dissatisfaction.

Asa Mahan, *Abstract of a Course of Lectures on Mental and Moral Philosophy* (Oberlin, O., 1840). He had the lectures printed, according to the preface, to enable his students to save the time formerly spent in copying them.

John L. Dagg, *The Elements of Moral Science* (New York, 1860).

Mark Hopkins, *Lectures on Moral Science* (Boston, 1868). They represent the lectures as given after 1830.

[1] Compend of Moral Philosophy. Ms. notes by John H. Hobart, taken in 1790. For similar notes of the lectures of Dwight and Nott *cf. infra*, pp. 115 and 137. There are also extant ms. notes of President Nisbet's lectures at Dickinson.

Andrews treats civil government and its basis, law and its sanctions, liberty, and democracy.

This body of topics forms the nucleus of all the courses and lectures mentioned above. In detail they differ. Johnson may stress the mental faculties—he was a Berkeleyan idealist; Smith may spend more time on man's physical nature—it was a hobby of his; Hopkins may devote the greater portion of his book to the development of his peculiar theory of ethics; but the framework just outlined underlies them all.

The American educators, as remarked, did not originate this course, but took it over, bag and baggage, from the philosophers of England and Scotland, where the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had witnessed a great output of books on moral philosophy. While much of the political theorizing goes back to Locke, whose works were widely used as texts, it was especially the writings of a group of Scottish philosophers and theologians that furnished the material and determined the character of the course in American colleges. In addition to Locke, the writings of Francis Hutcheson, Thomas Reid, James Beattie, Adam Ferguson, Dugald Stewart and Thomas Brown formed the basis of, and frequently provided the texts [1] for, the lectures of American professors.[2]

[1] The college catalogs of the period bear this out. *Cf.* also Snow, *passim.*

[2] Francis Hutcheson, 1694-1746. Professor of moral philosophy at Glasgow. He developed Shaftesbury's idea of an innate moral sense.

Thomas Reid, 1710-1796. Professor of moral philosophy at Aberdeen, where he succeeded Adam Smith.

James Beattie, 1735-1803. Professor of moral philosophy at Aberdeen.

Adam Ferguson, 1723-1816. Professor of moral philosophy at Edinburgh.

Dugald Stewart, 1753-1828. Pupil of Reid. Taught mathematics, later moral philosophy, at Edinburgh.

Thomas Brown, 1778-1820. Successor of Stewart in the chair of moral philosophy at Edinburgh.

In addition it is worth noting that a number of the leading American

Two Englishmen ranked with them in popularity: Dr. William Paley, the well-known Christian apologist in the conflict with deism, and Bishop Butler, author of the famous *Analogy of Religion.* In the selection of subject matter and arrangement of topics, as well as in aim and point of view, the course as given in the United States was patterned very closely after these authorities. This will become apparent in an examination of the principal American writers and a comparison of their works with those of their European models. Of the treatises mentioned above that of President Samuel Stanhope Smith of Princeton is the most complete and comprehensive. The rest are either mere syllabi, briefly listing topics that are to be developed orally, or else they are narrower in scope, ignoring or compressing some phases of the subject. Smith apparently wrote his lectures in full, and covers the field more thoroughly than do any of the others. His work, supplemented by pertinent citations from the other American texts, will therefore be placed in the center of the ensuing discussion in order to afford the fullest understanding of this favorite course of college presidents in its American version.

The dependence of the Americans upon English and Scottish philosophers has been noted, but while some of them—Smith for example—continually quote and refer to their British authorities, others preserve at least an outward independence of judgment. Gros of Columbia asserts his intention of doing his own thinking and of dissenting from the

educators and college presidents were Scotchmen. There were William Smith of Pennsylvania and Witherspoon of Princeton, born in Scotland, Samuel Stanhope Smith, Witherspoon's successor in office, of Scottish descent. Nisbet of Dickinson came from Scotland. Jefferson's acknowledgment of his debt to Professor Small, who came to William and Mary from Glasgow, is well known.

[1] William Paley, 1743-1805, author of the *Evidences of Christianity.* Joseph Butler, 1692-1752.

masters whenever he considers it advisable. Timothy Dwight too, if a student's notes are to be trusted, was quite critical in his comments on Paley, the text in use, repeatedly calling attention to this or that " great error " in the reasoning of the English divine.[1] But in the main the point of view of the American writers closely resembles that of Paley, Hutcheson, Beattie, and the Scottish school generally, with some infusion of Kantian ideas after 1840.[2]

To appreciate the demonstrations of the early group of American authors it must be borne in mind that these men wrote in the age of reason and natural law. Their entire argument is based on the rationalistic assumption that man is competent to evolve standards of right and wrong and even to discover the nature of the deity by applying rational judgments to the phenomena of nature and of his own consciousness. No external authority is required to determine these " laws of nature ", for every man contains within himself the means of recognizing them. Once known, the laws of nature will guide and control the intelligent man's actions and apparently also furnish the motive for right conduct.[3] The purpose of the moral philosophy course then, as its title indicates, is moral training along these lines.[4] Gros states

[1] Ms. notes by David L. Daggett, in 1807-8, of Dwight's comments on Paley's moral philosophy.

[2] Mahan and Hopkins acknowledge their debt to Kant.

[3] There were critics of this philosophy. Among them was President Clap of Yale, who published a short essay for the use of his classes in ethics, *An Essay on the Nature and Foundation of Moral Virtue and Obligations* (New Haven, 1765), in which he assails the prevailing view. It is very doubtful, he thinks, whether the average man is in the habit of evolving a perfect God and the laws of duty by means of arguments from design, or intuition, or first cause. Nor does he place much faith in the laws of nature. " What those things are . . . no man has ever yet pretended to determine with any clear evidence " (p. 48). Conduct can properly be based only upon the revealed knowledge of a perfect God and consists in constant effort to become more like him.

[4] According to Hutcheson, " The intention of Moral Philosophy is to

it as follows: "To instil into the minds of youth . . . the principles of morality and rectitude which will give them a true and happy direction in the pursuit of all public and private virtues, and by the exercise of which they may become useful to themselves, good members of society, and ornaments to their country." [1] Gros' definition of moral philosophy as "the science which gives rules for the direction of the will of man" [2] further emphasizes its didactic purpose. For Smith the object is to "propose principles to enable a rational and reflecting mind to deduce the point of duty for itself".[3] Samuel Johnson had set himself a similar objective: "It must be our business in this essay, to search out all the truths that relate both to ourselves, to God, and our fellow-creatures, and thence to deduce the several duties that do necessarily result from them".[4]

The motive then is utilitarian, in the highest sense of the word. Not culture *per se,* not knowledge for its own sake, but knowledge as the handmaid to virtue is the guiding principle. To be intelligent, however, virtue must be informed, and for that reason the study of human nature and of social institutions is combined with that of morals. Only upon such a broad foundation of understanding can a truly virtuous life be erected. By consciously building his own character and choosing the path of duty which the light of knowledge reveals to him, the intelligent man fits himself for a useful career in the community and the nation. And to point the

direct men to that course of action which tends most effectually to promote their greatest happiness and perfection; as far as it can be done by observation and conclusions discoverable from the constitution of Nature, without the aids of supernatural revelation." *A System of Moral Philosophy* (London, 1755), p. 1.

[1] *Op. cit.*, preface.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

[3] *The Lectures . . . on . . . Moral and Political Philosophy*, vol. i, p. 24.

[4] *Elementa Philosophica*, pt. 2, p. 10.

way and stimulate the desire for such enlightened conduct is the high purpose of moral philosophy.

This becomes more and more apparent as the course proceeds, for there is scarcely a subject touched upon by the lecturers which does not lead to a series of moralizing reflections. At times these come naturally, at times they are rather forced; but always they give point and purpose to the discussion. Even in economics, politics and international law the lesson in conduct constantly recurs, and the facts presented are but the prelude to the moral application.

Nevertheless President Smith, for one, is an advocate of the scientific method, which he considers the only correct one of approaching and developing his subject. "Philosophy", he explains, "is an investigation of the constitution and laws of nature, both in the physical and moral world, so far as the powers of the human mind, unaided by the light of revelation, are competent to discover them." [1] Not by the blind acceptance of traditions or unproved assumptions can the facts of human nature and the rules for human conduct be ascertained, but only by inductive scientific reasoning. In this laudably scientific frame of mind the doctor launches upon his course, and on the whole he remains loyal to his principles. But occasionally he encounters difficulties in the development of his subject. For one thing the data in some of the fields touched are too meager, and the eighteenth-century urge to rationalize is too strong, to permit of genuinely scientific results. Then, too, in ethics and religion there are *a priori* values already established for a president of Princeton, and his reasoning is therefore obliged to reach conclusions which agree, at least in essentials, with the tenets of the Westminster Catechism. But he evidently realizes the limitations which his subject imposes upon him, for he admits in one passage that after man's nature has been an-

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 9.

alyzed, the law of duty must be deduced by rational judgment,[1] and occasionally he bolsters his philosophical arguments with texts from Scripture. Essentially the same harmonizing of reason with revelation is found in the lectures of Witherspoon, Smith's famous predecessor and father-in-law. In reply to the objection that moral philosophy is either superfluous or dangerous inasmuch as it either agrees or does not agree with Scripture, Witherspoon contends that one must meet the infidel on his own ground and show him that nature and reason confirm and illustrate biblical truth. For true philosophy and the Bible always agree.[2]

On this point a reaction was about to set in. It came at the turn of the century and gained momentum with each succeeding decade. Even while Gros was lecturing at Columbia, Smith at Princeton and Andrews at Pennsylvania, Yale was regarding the rational philosophy with suspicion. President Clap's objection to overconfidence in the laws of nature has been referred to above.[3] Timothy Dwight in his comments on Paley ventures the opinion that Christian ministers have gone too far in substituting natural for revealed religion. It is a weak compromise and dangerous.[4] In his theological writings he contrasted natural theology with the Christian mediatorial system. At Columbia Provost Mason early in the nineteenth century had no patience with the sophistries of the rationalists who relied on the light of nature, which he considered "highly overrated".[5] By the time President Wayland of Brown brought out his text in 1835 deism and infidelity had pretty generally given way before these attacks

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 14.

[2] *Lectures on Moral Philosophy* (1912 ed.), pp. 1 *et seq.*

[3] Footnote, p. 115.

[4] Daggett notes.

[5] *The Writings of the Late John M. Mason* (Rev. Ebenezer Mason, ed., 4 vols., New York, 1832), vol. iii, p. 405 *et seq.*

of a revived orthodoxy. Wayland accordingly considers natural religion a useful aid within certain limits, but wholly inadequate as a basis of morality. The Bible is the "ultimate in morals"; God's will the norm and standard.[1]

Illustrative of the scope and flexibility of the moral philosophy course is the description of man's physical characteristics. Dismissed with a few words by Gros and some of the others, it constitutes a prominent feature of Smith's treatise. Such matters as complexion, facial expression and comparative anatomy receive special emphasis here, for research in this field was a hobby with him. His theory, which he had presented in a lecture before the American Philosophical Society,[2] and which he recapitulates in his class lectures, is briefly the following: climate and geographic environment do not only exercise a profound influence upon the complexion and physical structure of human beings, but are actually the chief cause of racial divergences. An extreme environmentalist, Smith explains virtually all physical differences in terms of sunlight, moisture, altitude and vegetation. These factors account not only for the obvious contrast between a negro and a white man, but have even operated in bringing about the difference in shading, which he claims to have observed, between the inhabitants of the eastern and western sections of New Jersey.[3] While the author quotes physicians and scientists and seems quite at home with his subject there is, as might be expected, an ulterior motive. For if racial differences are the result of environment and therefore merely accidental, then the Bible story of the creation and original unity of mankind will be rendered more plausible.

[1] *The Elements of Moral Science*, pp. 127, 139.

[2] The complete title is: *An Essay on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species.*

[3] In both books President Smith gives a startling account of a coal-black negro in Maryland whose complexion in the course of a few years changed to that of a normal white man.

When he therefore refutes Lord Kames' arguments for the diverse origin of human species or criticizes Thomas Jefferson's belief in the natural and permanent inferiority of the black race, he is not only breaking a lance in the interests of science; he is fighting for the faith.[1]

By means of the familar distinction of man as the rational being among animal creation the transition to psychology—the writers do not use that term—is effected. This phase of the subject is treated at length by Johnson, the idealist. In six chapters he deals with the objects and operations of the mind and its progress towards its highest perfection. Less systematically, but with much vivacity, Smith discusses mental activities and their physical basis. Here again the moral purpose is uppermost: instinct, habit, desire and reason are all implanted by the Creator for our happiness, if used moderately and virtuously. The point of view throughout is that of the Aristotelian " faculty " psychology. Beginning with some shrewd and modern-sounding observations on instincts and habits, the former of which he recognizes as non-rational mechanical responses to definite stimuli, Smith grows more and more speculative as he proceeds, until at the end, when confronted with the fundamental problems of free will and determinism, of monism and dualism, he deserts the field of experimental psychology altogether and enters the realm of speculative philosophy.

It will be conducive to a clearer understanding of the ensuing discussion if an analysis is first made of the philosophy underlying the texts of the American writers, which in turn probably reflect the intellectual outlook or " Weltan-

[1] In keeping with this tendency is his discussion of man's erect posture, which to him is proof conclusive that man is essentially different from the animals. The notion that man originally was an animal inhabiting the ocean, that his fins gradually extended into arms and his tail into legs, he considers " the most ridiculous opinion ". *Moral Philosophy*, vol. i, p. 30.

schauung" of a goodly portion of the cultivated men in the America of their day. It is a practical workable philosophy that shies at metaphysical abstractions and tends to explain all phenomena in terms of common sense and in the light of every-day experience. While life in America no doubt favored the growth of such an attitude, its antecedents are to be found in the above-mentioned Scottish writers, Reid, Stewart, Ferguson and Beattie, who are known as the philosophers of Common Sense.[1] The system propounded by Reid and his followers is a reaction and a protest against the presumably futile empiricism of Locke, Berkeley, and especially Hume.[2] Locke's thesis, it will be recalled, was that man cannot know the material world as it really is, but only as it appears to him through his senses, which are stimulated to create images or ideas of things in his mind. Bishop Berkeley carries the argument a step further by contending that inasmuch as one cannot know objective reality at all one has no right to assume its existence. Matter as a rational concept does not exist; only mind and ideas are real. It was left for Hume to demonstrate, logically enough, that the human mind has no more reality than the world of things about it. Neither can be known objectively; both are apprehended only by means of ideas gained through sense perception or introspection. Consequently the existence of neither mind nor matter can be postulated, but only that of ideas. At this point Reid took up the cudgels and suggested that there are after all no such things as abstract ideas serving as intermediaries between

[1] Paley of course was not one of the Scottish realists. He was an Anglican clergyman, and went to such lengths in his attempt to harmonize Christianity with deism that he may almost be classed as a mild deist. Though widely used in American colleges, his works seem to have evoked much more criticism than those of the Scottish writers.

[2] G. A. Johnston, *Selections from the Scottish Philosophers of Common Sense* (Chicago, 1915), p. 18 and *passim*; James McCosh, *The Scottish Philosophy* (New York, 1875), ch. i and *passim*.

mind and matter, except in the imaginations of hair-splitting philosophers. The reduction to absurdity is now complete: Locke denies man's knowledge of the material world, Berkeley demolishes this world entirely, Hume annihilates the mind, Reid explodes the idea. Nothing is left and the field is cleared for a new philosophy. What shall be its guiding principle? Common sense, says Reid. That will lead philosophy out of the dilemma in which oversharp dialectic has entangled it. When logic and metaphysical abstractions result in palapable absurdities, all one can do is to fall back on practical common sense and start afresh.[1]

Introduced into Princeton by Witherspoon, this Scottish philosophy of common sense displaced the idealistic tendencies in vogue there.[2] The Berkeleyan system, as expounded by President Johnson of Columbia, gave way before the logic and the ridicule of the Scottish divine, until his realistic views came to dominate Princeton, and through Princeton the Presbyterian institutions of the West and South that grew up under its influence. Even in New England colleges the Scottish realism gained ground, as the texts in use there readily show. The treatise by Thomas Brown, for example, a leading exponent of the school, was adopted at Yale, Harvard and Amherst, as well as by western schools like Transylvania in Kentucky. Wayland's text of 1835 was in essential agreement with the realists, and Mark Hopkins, at least in his early years at Williams, also presented the common-sense philosophy.[3] Isolated instances, such as the lectures of Provost Beasley at Pennsylvania, show that Locke and Berkeley were not entirely discarded.[4] Yet they had lost

[1] The intricate and refined arguments of the school have necessarily been oversimplified in this brief appraisal. For an appreciation and criticism *cf.* McCosh's *The Scottish Philosophy.*

[2] McCosh, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

[3] Franklin Carter, *Mark Hopkins* (Boston, 1892), pp. 101, 106.

[4] Beasley's work, *A Search of Truth in the Science of the Human*

caste. The realistic view was not seriously challenged until well after the middle of the nineteenth century, when Kantian idealism, which had been filtering in through the medium of Coleridge and Emerson, began to assume formidable proportions. Aside from the German-trained members of the Harvard faculty, the pioneers of this movement in the colleges were President James Marsh, an independent thinker who established an idealistic school in the University of Vermont,[1] and President Asa Mahan of Oberlin. The latter, in the preface to his published class lectures on moral philosophy, acknowledges his indebtedness to Kant, Cousin and Coleridge, and the lectures themselves, while thoughtful and critical, are a conscious adaptation of German idealism. Another well-reasoned treatise is that of Mark Hopkins of Williams, mentioned above, who began with dissent from Paley, and advanced through Kant and Coleridge to an independent position that may be characterized as a sublimated utilitarianism, and that roused the vigorous opposition of President M'Cosh of Princeton.[2]

But the views represented by Marsh and Mahan were exceptional; the main stream of thought remained realistic.

Mind (Philadelphia, 1822), is a conscious reaction against Common Sense, which he had imbibed at Princeton. In a prefatory statement he explains to Bishop Hobart, to whom he dedicated his book, that further study had convinced him that Locke and the empiricists have beein misinterpreted by Reid and his followers, and that his, Beasley's, purpose in this volume is to restore Locke to his rightful place. Yet even he, in his eagerness to defend Locke against the charge of scepticism, comes in the end to propound an essentially realistic doctrine. I. Woodbridge Riley, *American Philosophy—The Early Schools* (New York, 1907), bk. v, ch. vi.

[1] James Torrey, *The Remains of the Rev. James Marsh* (Boston, 1843), p. 135: Letter of Marsh to Coleridge, Mar. 23, 1829. Marjorie H. Nicolson, "James Marsh and the Vermont Transcendentalists", in *The Philosophical Review* for January, 1925 ascribes a high place to Marsh among the Transcendentalist leaders.

[2] Carter, *op. cit.*, p. 162 *et seq.*

Whatever its merits as a philosophy—and there were critics unkind enough to suggest that it appealed to those who, like King George III, were not peculiarly intelligent—the Scottish philosophy of common sense came to dominate American academic thought.[1] In fact the movement did not reach its climax until late in the nineteenth century, when President M'Cosh of Princeton tried to raise it to the dignity of the one distinctively American philosophy. He says:

> Hitherto America has had no special philosophy as the ancient Greeks had, as the Scotch have had, and the Germans have had. But there is a philosophy lying before it, and it should appropriate it, and call it its own—an advance beyond Locke, beyond the Scottish School—the American philosophy. This would be in thorough accordance with the American character which claims to be so practical. The change from the speculative to this thoroughly realistic philosophy would not be unlike that from the European Monarchies to the American Republics.[2]

This is the philosophy to which the lectures of the American "moral professors" conformed. It is especially evident in the works of Witherspoon and Smith. By common sense Smith solves, at least to his own satisfaction, the age-old problem of free will and determinism, with which Zeno and Socrates, Augustine and Pelagius, Luther and Erasmus, Calvin and Arminius had all wrestled in vain. With a magnificent gesture he brushes aside the speculations of the ages, which to his mind have only beclouded the issue, and bids his hearers follow everyday experience, when the whole problem will prove quite simple. "Every man is conscious to himself that he acts freely"[3] except—he does make this concession—when moved by violent passion or inveter-

[1] Johnston, *op. cit.*, p. 22. *Cf.* I. Woodbridge Riley, *op. cit.*, p. 478.

[2] *Philosophy of Reality* (New York, 1894), section 1 (introductory).

[3] *Op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 277.

ate habit. Motives and impulses are only persuasive, the mind is placed as a judge listening to the pleas of different advocates and deciding with magisterial authority between them. Since all this is somewhat unusual coming from the lips of an orthodox Presbyterian minister, he hastens to qualify his position by admitting the Scriptural doctrine of the total depravity of natural man. But in a state of grace, he contends, the Christian is surely placed on his responsibility and must therefore be able to decide freely between right and wrong. Besides, the alternative presents ethical difficulties. "The doctrine of necessity, when pursued to its ultimate consequences, appears to destroy all moral distinctions".[1] If there is no choice there can be no right or wrong. Free will alone permits moral culture and self-improvement.

The logic of this position may be shoddy in spots, and its facts may not all bear inspection in the light of recent psychological research. But even though the problems of instinct *vs.* reason and heredity *vs.* environment seem more complex than ever in these days of psycho-analysis and behaviorism, yet one can appreciate the cheerful optimism of a simpler age when all knowledge seemed attainable and every determined effort rewarded with success.

The free-will argument leads to a discussion of morality, virtue and religion, the very heart of the course. Throughout this discussion the efforts of Smith, as well as of Gros and Witherspoon, are directed towards the harmonizing of reason with revelation. Not only must Christianity be proved rational, but philosophy must become orthodox. It is a case of the eighteenth century absorbing the seventeenth, of Puritanism adapting itself to the Enlightenment. By a few judicious concessions, it seems, the authors are trying to cut the ground from under the extreme rationalists and

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 278.

thus to save the day for Christianity. Says Gros: "It is an incontrovertible truth that reason is religion, because religion is the greatest perfection of reason and gives it the happiest direction." [1] Morality can therefore be expected to be found grounded both in reason and in religion. As Gros sees it, morality is based on the will of God as it is revealed in nature, experience and reason. Happiness, the goal of morality, consists in obeying the laws of nature, and such obedience is virtue. Conscience, enlightened by reason and experience, is also the basis for Witherspoon.[2] In a more psychological approach Smith, following Hutcheson, defines morality as an inner sense or intuition, having the same relation to the principles of duty and right as the eye has to color.[3] While this moral sense is subject to error and must be guided by experience and reason, it is by no means a mere opinion or habit of thought sanctioned by custom or imposed by one's environment. Superficial customs may vary with time and locality, but the underlying principles are always and everywhere the same. The existence of a sense of right and wrong is no accident; God implanted it for the purpose of directing men's lives, in accordance with the laws of nature and reason, towards greater perfection. Such perfection of life, for which virtue is merely another name, consists in self-realization in the broadest sense of the term, physical, intellectual, social and moral, and is achieved by following that inner monitor, the moral sense, reenforced by reason and experience. Education, athletics, unselfish cooperation in community enterprises, even good manners in young men, are factors in the process of self-realization and therefore to be reckoned unto them for righteousness.

An enlightened individualism then is the ethical ideal set

[1] *Op. cit.*, preface.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

[3] *Op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 301 *et seq.*

before American students, at any rate in Princeton, in the early years of the nation's existence. While Smith's position was perhaps somewhat advanced, it is nevertheless apparent that in some quarters the rigorous soul-searching of early Puritan days was giving way to a more liberal and common-sense view of life. For a conception of virtue which identifies it with man's fullest self-development in the sphere in which nature has placed him, and which places such emphasis upon the happiness of the individual, is not a Puritan ideal; it is Greek.

Witherspoon is more equivocal on the subject of the objectives of virtue. He presents four leading views and then, canny Scotchman that he is, agrees with them all: "Upon these opinions I would observe, that there is something true in every one of them, but that they may be easily pushed to error by excess." [1] Dwight and Wayland make the will of God the norm and standard of morals. The former admits a utilitarian end in morality, but argues that since finite man is unable in every case to perceive the ultimate good or utility of his actions, he must accept the absolute and perfect standards of an all-knowing God.[2] Hopkins believes actions to be intrinsically worthy if conducive to happiness and man's greatest good,[3] and Mahan operates with the categorical imperative.[4] But whatever the objectives of moral action that reason and experience may dictate,[5] all the writers, both the earlier and the later, agree that virtue is further sanctioned

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 28.

[2] Daggett notes. Wayland, *op. cit., passim.*

[3] *Lectures on Moral Science*, p. 179 *et seq.*

[4] *Abstract of a Course of Lectures on Mental and Moral Philosophy*, p. 191 and *passim.*

[5] In this brief condensation it is obviously impossible to discuss the features of the various systems, as for example the law of love and the law of limitations in Hopkins' treatise.

by the will of God, and it therefore behooves them, in view of current irreligious and atheistic speculations, to demonstrate philosophically the existence and qualities of God. Their chief reliance in this demonstration are the three stock arguments, the cosmological, the teleological and the ontological, which are presented, in varying detail, at times in a stimulating and thought-provoking manner, and which prove exactly as much as they ever have.[1]

The limits of moral philosophy, properly speaking, have now been reached. But since it was the purpose of the course to prepare the students for intelligent service in the community and nation, it was necessary that they be supplied with whatever organized knowledge the age possessed of social, economic and political institutions. This portion of the course is unequally treated by the various American writers, Stanhope Smith as usual furnishing the most extended discussion. Under the head of economics both Smith and Gros adopt the conventional arrangement and discuss marriage, rights and duties of parents, property and slavery.[2] As usual they find the Bible and reason in complete accord on the subject. Wayland treats the same topics as questions of practical ethics under the heading: Love of Man. He too proposes to derive the laws of conduct and civic righteousness both from natural religion and from Scriptures, but it is generally the latter that decides the issue.[3]

Of special interest are the views expressed about slavery. To Beattie and Hutcheson, the Scotch prototypes, hereditary slavery is an unmitigated evil that cannot be too strongly condemned. Gros, likewise, is emphatic in his denunciation, but Witherspoon and Smith are more conservative. The

[1] Smith, ch. xv. Gros, p. 65. For the Scriptural basis *cf.* Romans 1 : 20.

[2] Essentially the same topics are treated by Beattie, Paley and Hutcheson.

[3] *Op. cit., passim.*

last-named, while agreeing in principle, doubts the advisability of abolishing negro slavery in the United States. Emancipation, if practicable at all, must come very gradually. Meanwhile masters should be kind to their slaves and provide them with religious instruction.

Wayland, however, writing in 1835, favors emancipation, though he too would have it proceed decently and in order, and for just compensation. In 1849 Wayland devoted three weeks of his course to this topic alone, at a time when a fourth of his class were Southerners.[1] Mahan refuses to temporize. Lecturing in Oberlin, destined to be an important station in the Underground Railway, he considers slavery utterly unjustifiable at any time. The outlines of his lectures on this subject imply a stand for complete and unconditional emancipation.[2]

A different interpretation came from the South. In his textbook on moral science John L. Dagg, president of Mercer in Georgia, vigorously defends the peculiar institution on Biblical and common-sense grounds. Subordination of the lower race to the higher, he maintains, is just and inevitable, and individual slave-holders are really the agents of the government in securing the safety of society.[3] Had Timothy Dwight in his day been able to foresee the emergence of these conflicting views, which proclaim the inability of moral philosophers to detach themselves entirely from their environment, he might have been more hesitant about insisting, as he does in his lectures, that principles never bend to circumstances.[4]

Political theory, the last subject treated in the course, furn-

[1] James B. Angell, *Reminiscences* (New York, 1912), p. 28.

[2] *Op. cit.*, last topic.

[3] John L. Dagg, *op. cit.*, p. 338 *et seq.* For the views of President Thomas Dew of William and Mary, *cf. infra*, ch. vi.

[4] Daggett notes.

ishes most vivacious and stimulating discussions. The purpose again is ethical. He will be happy, says Gros, if his book will

> inflame the American youth with a true love for their country, with a spirit of patriotism worthy their great rights and privileges, as the free-born sons of the free and independent states of North-America. . . . May they become good men, good citizens, the supporters of the government of laws, the defenders of their country; respecters of religion, and true lovers of God, their benign and universal Father.[1]

President Smith makes the conventional threefold division found in the older European texts: civil rights, the basis and functions of government, and international relations.[2] Individual rights, it will be observed, precede the discussion of the framework of government. The author distinguishes between natural rights, such as life, liberty and the full use of one's faculties, and artificial rights, such as property, which require social sanction. Of course it must not be forgotten that private property contributes to the happiness of mankind and is sanctioned by God. Gros finds the right of private property both natural and reasonable. A nation of small landed proprietors is his ideal, and he deplores the existence of large manors as "lordships in embryo threatening this western world of freemen with tenancy".[3] Property rights, in Smith's estimation, are best secured if the existing methods of court procedure, especially the jury trial, are maintained, for he holds with Paley that judge and jury are a happy combination to secure both wisdom and impartiality.

[1] *Moral Philosophy*, preface.

[2] *Moral Philosophy*, ch. xxii, *passim*.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 259. Though the strictly manorial privileges did not survive the Revolution, the great holdings of Livingston, Van Rensselaer and others remained in New York, the state with which Gros was most familiar.

The distribution of the powers of government among three coordinate departments is an ideal arrangement for safeguarding the people's rights. In the same interest judges should be appointed for life and not elected for limited terms. The courts, when applying the law, must be careful not to modify it, but to confine themselves to a "literal exposition".[1] Since, in Smith's opinion, it can be assumed that legislatures will enact laws without reference to peculiar interests, not under the bias of party attachments, but under view of general circumstances, it is bad policy to allow any court to bend the law.[2] Not the faintest suggestion here of the doctrine of judicial supremacy, and the possible role of the Supreme Court as a final arbiter of legislation does not seem to enter his mind. When he does speak of the highest tribunal of the nation he means the Senate.

While the separation of powers is an important safety device, the best means of protecting liberty and safeguarding the social order is universal education and religion. The former is to be actively encouraged by the government, but toward the latter the state should merely maintain an attitude of benevolent neutrality. So Smith thinks; Witherspoon and Dwight would go further and have the state make public provision for worship according to the wishes of the majority, without however coercing anyone.[3] Gros, with the same objects in view, approves of Sabbath legislation, for, he contends, since most Americans are Christians anyway, nobody will be injured by such laws.[4] Wayland, writing after the disestablishment in Connecticut and in Massachusetts, is content to make Sabbath observance a moral duty,

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 232. [2] ***Ibid.***

[3] Witherspoon, *op. cit.*, lecture xiv (xv, in ms. A of 1912 ed.). Dwight, *Travels in New-England and New-York* (4 vols., London, 1823), vol. iv, p. 388.

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 413.

not to be enforced by police power.[1] All the writers emphatically denounce an established church with exclusive privileges and all forms of religious compulsion as inimical to liberty and a violation of man's moral nature. Indicative of educational ideals of the time is Smith's suggested intellectual aristocracy, presumably made up of college graduates, who should not however take an active part in politics but serve a higher purpose by becoming " fountains of light " radiating knowledge through the community.[2]

The ideal form of government is of course that of the United States, with its written constitution, its principle of representation, and its separation of powers. Yet the professors do not want to appear dogmatic about it. Gros for instance dismisses all theoretical discussion of the basis and origin of government as unprofitable.[3] Witherspoon, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, inclines to the contract theory. He acknowledges the advantages of democracy, but at the same time his fear of demagogues leads him to declare for a mixed form, in which democratic and aristocratic elements are evenly balanced to prevent majority tyranny.[4] And Smith agrees with Montesquieu that the form of government must be adapted to the character of the people, the determining factors of which are their religion, occupation and history, as well as the climate and strategic position of their country. No amount of legislation can change such fundamental conditions. That government is best which works. Any of the historic forms, despotism, monarchy, aristocracy or democracy may prove successful provided conditions are right; but since in a democracy the mainspring of action is virtue, that is the preference of public

[1] *Moral Science*, p. 197.

[2] *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 226.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 359.

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 92 and *passim.*

to private interests, that form is after all superior to any other.[1]

In order to keep it so, urges Smith, intelligent American citizens will have to pay attention to a number of little matters, any one of which may, if not checked in time, grow into a menance to free institutions. And here again the human element enters in and moral precepts are made to fit political views of the moment. There is the separation of powers, that bulwark of liberty, which some states, he fears, are beginning to neglect. Then as to the suffrage the best plan undoubtedly is a property qualification. "Universal suffrage is always dangerous in time to the tranquillity of the state." [2] Furthermore, he says, candor demands that the ballot be open and not secret. Indirect taxes are preferable to direct. If the government must tax directly let it levy a land tax, which is easily imposed. Stocks and bonds should not be assessed, for that would be prying into trade secrets. But the most odious of all is the federal excise tax, which leads to snooping and spying and brings the government into disrepute. There should be no interference with complete freedom of trade. An occasional restrictive government policy to foster manufacture may be desirable, yet on principle "commerce ought to be as free as the ocean on which it is borne or the winds which waft it".[3] Even though trading may engender a shrewd calculating spirit, the merchant's calling is an honorable one, and a flourishing commerce is prerequisite to national prosperity. It is also well to bear in mind that prices and value depend upon supply and demand, and that it is a mistaken policy to interfere with an economic axiom by legislation.

With this political confession of faith President Smith

[1] *Op. cit.*, ch. xxvii, *passim.*

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 298.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 344.

closes his discussion of government and its powers. Some of his views have been superseded, others may be found in modern textbooks of political science and economics. His general attitude is best summed up in his observation that "while the principle of the constitution is preserved the worst laws are harmless, when that is corrupted the best are useless." [1]

In Wayland's discussion of civil society the superiority of the American plan of government is implied. At the same time he argues that in the long run every nation gets the kind of government that it deserves. The degree of freedom which a people enjoys is conditioned upon the standard of moral excellence which it has attained. Wayland is also an exponent of laisser-faire, holding that only those governmental activities can be taken for granted that are absolutely essential to the existence of civilized society. All else is a matter of adjustment and concession, to be determined by contract.[2]

International relations is the next topic in the regular order of the course. To Gros they are a necessary evil. If the government has signed a treaty it is bound, of course, to observe it, but far better never to sign any, like China. Smith is more optimistic about the influence of learned men in promoting peaceful international relations. He urges American statesmen, in the interests of peace, to make the extension of neutrals' rights in war their special concern.[3] A nation's right to wage war is extensively treated especially by the earlier writers. Briefly stated, their conclusions are that while an offensive war is never justifiable, a defensive war always is, even one in which the government, having reason to suspect insincerity or contemplated aggression on the part of another nation, strikes first!

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 315.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 391 *et seq.*

[3] *Op. cit.*, ch. xxxi, *passim.*

The discussions of government and politics display, more than any other part of the course, elements distinctively American.[1] The bulk of the material presented in these lectures is, as has been shown, European in origin and, with a few exceptions, contains little that is new or unprecedented. In the expression of their political beliefs, however, the American college presidents display a greater degree of independent thought and at times differ most sharply from their Scottish and English mentors. Naturally enough, in view of recent occurrences in which some of them had taken part, they prefer a republic and some degree of democracy to all monarchical forms, even to the splendid British compromise that Paley lauds. And in defining the relation of the individual to the state they stress personal independence and local self-government, whereas the British writers had placed greater emphasis on the need for law and order. The Pennsylvanians who so irritated President Nisbet of Dickinson because they would rather manage their own affairs than have them well-managed, were merely applying the political philosophy of the "moral professors" of Columbia and Princeton. Perhaps it was this difference in point of view that led Jefferson, when founding the University of Virginia, to choose an American for the chair of moral philosophy although the remainder of the faculty consisted almost entirely of Europeans. Both he and the Visitors of the university insisted on this exception, for they wanted no "European gospel" in this course, which "gives tone and direction to the public mind." [2]

Civil government customarily formed the last topic of the

[1] Though the reasoning of the American writers resembles that of Rousseau and other eighteenth-century French philosophers, there is little evidence to show that Smith and his contemporaries borrowed from, or even had first-hand acquaintance with, the latter.

[2] J. S. Patton, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

course, and with it the authors bring their lectures to a close. Wide as is the sweep of these printed lectures they do not contain everything that might be crowded into the course. It could be—and was—expanded in almost every direction; its possibilities were limitless. Students' notes and allusions in biographies and memoirs indicate that more than one president made over the course to suit his needs or inclinations, the text merely furnishing an excuse or a point of departure for his remarks. Any text would do, since it served as a vehicle for whatever information or advice the president felt his senior class should receive. Classroom methods lent themselves to this form of treatment. A portion of the text, previously assigned, was first covered in a more or less mechanical recitation of question and answer, after which the president launched into a discussion of the author's argument or any topic remotely connected with it. Among the outstanding figures who followed this general plan may be mentioned Dwight of Yale, Wayland of Brown and Nott of Union. Naturally the value of such lectures depended less upon the contents of the book than upon the keenness of analysis and breadth of understanding displayed by the lecturer.

Among the most curious examples of such informal courses are President Nott's lectures on Lord Kames' *Elements of Criticism*.[1] Though it was the work of one of the Scottish realists, this book did not deal with moral philosophy primarily, but was rather a text of rhetoric and esthetic criticism. Nott used it very loosely as a basis of remarks on a great variety of subjects. These lectures seem to have left a deeper impression with the students than any other subject in the curriculum. Frederick W. Seward describes them in his reminiscences:

[1] Lord Kames (Henry Home), *Elements of Criticism*. Like the works of Paley, Stewart, Brown and others, this work went through several British and American editions. First ed., 1762.

The study at Union that was of prime importance in those days [1845-1849] was known as "Kames". It was the afternoon lecture or recitation of the senior class, in which Dr. Nott was the preceptor. It was based upon Kames's *Elements of Criticism*. But Lord Kames himself would have rubbed his eyes in astonishment, if he could have seen and heard the use that was made of his book. He would have found it so amplified and expanded that, instead of a compend of aesthetics, it had become a comprehensive study of human nature, ranging over the whole field of physical, moral, and intellectual philosophy, and applied to practical use in business, politics, and religion. Usually this afternoon session took the form of a monologue by Dr. Nott, replete with wit and wisdom, but varied occasionally by question or dialogue, to keep up individual attention in the class. We were taught the analysis of human emotions and passions—how to control our own, how to deal with the manifestation of them by others, how to choose the modes of expression and the rules for conduct of life that would enable each to use his natural powers to the best advantage. Quotations from authors and illustrations from history and from the Doctor's own experience lent the whole a fascinating interest. . . . Many a clergyman, many an author, many a lawyer and statesman has found that Dr. Nott and "Kames" have given him the solution of some of the most perplexing problems of his life.[1]

Details of Nott's course are available from a student's notebook of the year 1829.[2] According to these notes the

[1] Frederick W. Seward, *Reminiscences of a War-time Statesman and Diplomat* (New York, 1916), p. 65.

[2] Instructions delivered to the Senior Class in Union College, Schenectady in 1828-9, by The Reverend Eliphalet Nott . . . The ms. is copied from notes taken by Wm. Soul and Henry Baldwin. There are a few obvious misinterpretations, but in the main these notes seem to be a fairly accurate account of the rambling and vivacious lectures of Nott. At any rate they indicate what the students thought he said, and after all a lecturer's influence goes no farther than the comprehension of his hearers.

discussion of the text was preceded by a general introduction, the high points of which were exhortations to the class to take notes diligently, to analyze everything they read, but not to read too much. Kames was then taken up and discussed passage for passage, but in a critical and independent manner. A few examples will illustrate the method. Kames says that brutes act from instinct, man is framed to be governed by reason, but President Nott's long experience has taught him better:

> Man seldom acts from reason. If you proceed to deal with men on this supposition you will assuredly fail. . . . Men are more rational in retirement. But in society feeling rules all. In a small class now a few students might be very rational but where the class is so large, there is less reason. In the whole college there is very little reason. And if there were a thousand here there would be no reason at all.

Among other things, as the lectures proceed, he recommends physical exercise, tells how to break up a mob, suggests the best time for successful courtship, and takes a fling at actors, who cannot develop their own characters because they must assume so many others. Kames, he holds in another passage, does not appreciate the tremendous power of music. It is music that accounts for the rapid growth of population in New England. For there the young people meet at singing school, where the sweet strains arouse their tender emotions and lead to early marriages. Methodist preachers do not live as long as others because they do not laugh so much. In the study of history the emphasis should be upon cause and effect, not upon names and dates. It is to be deplored that eloquence has declined to such a degree that people are no longer swept away by an appeal to their passions, but allow momentous questions to be decided in stuffy committee rooms,—this though Nott was a fair committee

worker and lobbyist himself. Throughout he displays acute powers of analysis and much pedagogic wisdom, though a certain amount of gullibility is also evident. He knew of a boy in Connecticut with mudturtle flappers for arms, the result of prenatal influence; and he cannot quite divest himself of his belief in ghosts.

Such a course and such a man are not easily forgotten. John Bigelow, after severely criticizing conditions at the college he first attended, goes on to speak very highly of Nott's lectures that he heard after coming to Union.[1] Indicative of the extent and duration of his influence is the fact that both Frederick W. Seward, quoted above, and his father, Secretary William H. Seward, were Nott's students and speak warmly of his lectures and general ability. At a memorial celebration as late as 1904 nearly every one of a long list of speakers had something to say about "Kames", which apparently had impressed them more than any other feature of their college life.[2]

Equally impressive are the tributes to Francis Wayland of Brown, whose lectures have been repeatedly referred to in the previous pages. Wayland, a pupil of Nott, seems to have imbued his course with a good deal of the latter's life and enthusiasm. "To nearly every student", says James B. Angell, "the most important event in his college life in those days was the contact with the vigorous and suggestive mind of Dr. Wayland, in the senior classroom, and especially during the study of moral philosophy. . . . He was a very inapt pupil who passed from under Dr. Wayland's instruction without catching something of his catholic spirit, his passionate love of soul-liberty, and his earnest Christian principle." [3]

[1] John Bigelow, *Retrospections of an Active Life* (5 vols., New York, 1909), vol. i, p. 34.

[2] A. V. Raymond, *Union University* (3 vols., New York, 1907), vol. i, ch. xix: Speeches and reminiscences on Nott memorial day in 1904.

[3] James B. Angell, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

In the opinion of the Hon. John H. Clifford the single year of the students' intercourse with Wayland was worth more to them than all the previous years in college, for it effected a complete moral revolution.[1] And the autobiography of Ezekiel Gilman Robinson, himself destined to become president of Brown, contains this passage:

> The most profitable portion of my college life was its last year, under the instruction of President Wayland. . . . His specialty as a teacher was moral science, though he also taught political economy. But the latter interested him only theoretically; the former, practically and intensely. His strong sense of justice and his profound love of truth made him a most impressive teacher of ethics,—the most impressive I have ever known. . . . He was no metaphysician; his moral science, even in its distinctively theoretic portions, was more practical than metaphysical, no part of it resting on any metaphysical system, avowed or implied. . . . Above all men whom I ever knew, he was himself the embodiment of what he taught.[2]

Such well-known figures as Timothy Dwight and Mark Hopkins were of course acclaimed in the same manner. Among those inspired by the former's lectures were S. F. B. Morse and S. G. Goodrich.[3] The latter characterizes Dwight as not a mere instructor, but through his lectures on health, manners, morals, patriotism and religion a real counselor and guide. Benjamin Silliman remarks the eagerness with which the students looked forward to the senior year and the presi-

[1] Quoted in F. and H. L. Wayland, *A Memoir of the Life and Labors of Francis Wayland* (2 vols., New York, 1867), vol. i, ch. x. The memoir includes many excerpts from Wayland's reminiscences and correspondence.

[2] *Autobiography of Ezekiel Gilman Robinson* (E. H. Johnson, ed., New York, 1896), p. 16.

[3] S. I. Prime, *Life of S. F. B. Morse* (New York, 1875), p. 16 *et seq.* S. G. Goodrich, *Recollections of a Lifetime* (2 vols., New York, 1857), vol. i, p. 354.

dent's animated course.[1] Hopkins' influence was so pervasive that one of his former students admitted that whatever good teaching he himself may have done was Mark Hopkins teaching through him.[2] One well acquainted with Williams College under Hopkins observed: "All Williams men have a family resemblance. They all bear the mark of the same master mind."[3] President Garfield's statement about Hopkins at the other end of the log is too well known to require repetition. Similar refrains come from Harvard. President Kirkland, whose favorite subject was ethics, infused "the breath of intellectual life . . . into the dead body of the College".[4] A. S. Packard did not think very highly of the education he received at Bowdoin, but he makes one exception. President Appleton's senior course in Stewart, Locke, Paley and Butler "left ineffaceable impressions."[5]

In the west the same kind of training and fashioning was going on, though perhaps on a smaller scale. Jefferson Davis to the end of his life remembered the lectures of "the very brilliant Horace Holley",[6] who taught moral philosophy at Transylvania, and of whom a colleague gave an estimate: "Such was the aspiring and etherial character of Dr. Holley's

[1] "Our recitations are now becoming very interesting, by the useful and entertaining instruction which is communicated in them by the President. He is truly a great man". In Geo. P. Fisher, *Benjamin Silliman* (New York, 1866), vol. i, p. 32. *Cf.* also the memoir of Dwight in the latter's *Theology Explained and Defended* (4 vols., New Haven, 1843 ed.), vol. i, p. 21.

[2] Franklin Carter, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 128.

[4] Alexander Young, *A Discourse on the Life and Character of the Rev. John Thornton Kirkland* (Boston, 1840), p. 51.

[5] Cleaveland and Packard, *History of Bowdoin College* (Boston, 1882), p. 88.

[6] *Jefferson Davis, A. Memoir* (by his wife, 2 vols., New York, 1890), vol. i, p. 26.

intellect, that his chosen subjects in philosophy bordered on the transcendental." [1] The sincerity and integrity of President Bishop of Miami so affected Benjamin Harrison that he wrote his teacher after graduation:

Though I shall no more take my accustomed seat in your class room, I would not that this separation should destroy whatever interest you may have felt in my welfare. But that whenever you may see anything, in my course, which you deem reprehensible, be assured, any advice which may suggest itself, under whatever circumstances, and on whatever subject, can never meet other than a hearty welcome.[2]

While Professor Gros was teaching moral philosophy at Columbia it was he rather than the president who was the object of tributes and kind inquiries. Two letters, written by Columbia College graduates, are suggestive of the esteem in which he was held. Abraham Hun, writing to DeWitt Clinton from Albany, inquires about Mr. and Mrs. Gros, who seem to be the only members of the Columbia faculty group that command his continued interest. In the other, written at Kinderhook, Francis Silvester asks: "How is our worthy and kind Father, Mr. Gros? I long to see him." He then speaks of two other members of the faculty, asking whether the one still exercises his tyrannical government over the students and whether the other attends much to his college duties.[3] While it may have been Dr. Gros' personal qualities that called forth these comments, it is not unlikely that the nature of the course he taught cemented the bonds between him and his students.

[1] Charles Caldwell, *A Discourse on the Genius and Character of the Rev. Horace Holley* (Boston, 1828), p. 25.

[2] W. L. Tobey and W. O. Thompson, *The Diamond Anniversary Volume* (of Miami University, Hamilton, O., 1899), quoted p. 88.

[3] Ms. letters to DeWitt Clinton in Columbia University.

The importance of scattered reminiscences may easily be overstressed, but their very number and emphatic character in this case lend color to Jefferson's estimate of the presidents and their course; they did give tone and direction to the public mind. Since this body of philosophy was familiar to every college graduate in the country, constituting as it did the climax of his formal education and the last word of advice before he entered active life, it is not too much to assume that it did materially influence the thought and action of the leaders of the age. It is easy today to pick flaws, and to criticize both content and method. A course that covers such important fields as philosophy, political science, economics, psychology, sociology and anthropology in less than a year, and then spends half the time moralizing, is bound to be superficial, the critic will say. But it must not be forgotten that a century ago most of these sciences were still in the embryonic stage and scarcely differentiated from each other, and that not only a polite smattering, but a fairly intimate knowledge of all of them was considered quite within the range of possibility. Of course the situation was even then becoming unmanageable. Economics and political science were already establishing themselves in their own right, with psychology and the rest to follow soon after.

Significant in this connection are the integration and orientation courses that are growing common in colleges and undergradute departments of universities today. These courses usually represent an attempt to check the disintegrating process, which, aggravated by the spread of the free elective system, has in recent years been leading educational curricula into the opposite extreme of excessive diffusion. Specialization today has reached a point where the average college student can no longer hope to master more than one small sector of human knowledge and, bound to leave large areas of material untouched, is apt to come away

with a very inadequate comprehension of life. Educators have therefore begun to look for a new combination, a higher synthesis of the various fields of knowledge and achievement. As a modern critic puts it:

> During the earlier days many a "settee" from which some dear old professor had dispensed prodigious amounts of Latin, astronomy, Bible, geology and mathematics, had been tenderly taken to the attic and in its place had been set numerous "chairs" in accordance with the demands of the more progressive departmental system. In the new dispensation these ancient settees—relics of a bygone and almost forgotten day—are being brought down, carefully dusted, and restored to their places of honor in the classroom.[1]

One modern university, for example, offers a course that is described as an attempt to fuse the subject-matter usually treated separately under philosophy, history, economics, and government. Its purpose is "to raise for consideration the insistent problems of the present", to aid the student "to understand the civilization of his own day, and to participate effectively in it".[2] Among the topics treated are the world of nature and of human nature, religion and morality, problems of popular government, economic problems, and international relations. All this sounds strangely familiar. Allowing for the changed point of view, and the vast increase in the amount of informational data available, both the product of nineteenth-century science, one need but change a few terms: nature to God, social animal to rational being, heredity and environment to necessity or determinism, social service to duty and virtue, and there emerge the Rev. John Witherspoon and the Rev. Samuel Stanhope Smith and the

[1] Robert L. Kelly (ed.), *The Effective College* (New York, 1928), p. 54.

[2] *Introduction to Contemporary Civilization* (6th edition, New York, 1926), introductory note.

Rev. John Daniel Gros, with their scientifically determined principles of conduct and their desire to render their students happy and useful members of society. In short, educators today are again seeking what the old time college president was achieving: a unified interpretation of life.

CHAPTER V

Some Prophets of New Ideals

It was not by accident that mortar from Virgil's tomb and a chip of Plymouth Rock were imbedded in the cornerstone of Allegheny College,[1] for they represented ideas in which colleges and college executives of the early nineteenth century were vitally interested. More than any other topic, the world of higher education in the period covered by the present treatise was discussing the views and principles symbolized by these inert bits of matter. Where they did not furnish the main source of inspiration they were still the chief objects of controversy. Most of the educational writings of college presidents of the period deal with the question of the importance of the classics and their relative value in the curriculum. The religious and political philosophy of New England, which is popularly traced back to the Plymouth settlement, was the greatest single factor in determining the character of college activities generally as well as the standards of their leaders. This will be demonstrated in the present and the following chapter.

Of 276 presidents in the pre-Civil-War period, 116, or about 40 per cent, were New Englanders by birth.[2] Many

[1] *Cf. supra*, p. 97.

[2] These figures are based upon a compilation of biographical data of the presidents of seventy-one institutions that were founded prior to 1840 and were still in existence in 1860. The *American Almanac* lists one hundred for 1840, but adds that a number of these were really academies. Then, too, the Catholic colleges, staffed by Jesuits, which the *Almanac* names, are not included in the present compilation.

more were of New England extraction and reared in New England environment. Obviously these 116 did not all remain at home, in fact most of them founded or presided over colleges elsewhere in the United States. Nott of Union, Backus of Hamilton, Alden of Allegheny, Finney of Oberlin, White of Wabash, Beecher and Sturtevant of Illinois, Blanchard of Knox, Olin of Randolph-Macon, Cushing of Hampden-Sidney, Maxcy of South Carolina, Adams of Charleston, Meigs and Church of Georgia, Holley of Transylvania, Coffin of Eastern Tennessee, Barnard of Mississippi—all of them were New Englanders, and every one put the stamp of his personality upon the college over which he presided. Modified by its environment and diluted, sometimes in direct proportion to the distance from its source, the New England influence persisted nevertheless and made itself felt everywhere in the country. The New England way of life was not likely to leave anyone cold; it either gained adherents or roused vehement opposition. In the spheres of education, of politics, of religion, it was everywhere a force to be reckoned with. It is precisely in these three directions that the influence of college presidents outside the college walls made itself felt. The ensuing discussion of such extra-campus activities will therefore be oriented from Virgil's tomb and Plymouth Rock.

The dominating position of the classics in the college curriculum of the time was discussed in an earlier chapter. To most educators of the period the superiority of mental discipline to mental furnishings was axiomatic. The intellectual gymnastics growing out of the translation of a daily quota of lines from the works of Greek and Roman authors was an end in itself and the acme of scholastic achievement for the undergraduate. Constant repetition of the process was bound, sooner or later, to educate a man. The results achieved as well as the process itself were not everywhere the

same, for here again the human element entered as a determining factor. A man of Philip Lindsley's ability might impart his enthusiasm for Greek and Latin literature to such a degree that in his classes the dead languages lived.[1] Many references by graduates to the stimulating qualities of this or that president's course, not only in moral philosophy, but in the classics or any subject that he happened to teach, point in the same direction. The inspired teacher clothed the bones of Virgil and Homer with flesh and blood; the unimaginative drill-master contented himself with the mechanics of translation.

Inspired teachers, however, seem to have been conspicuous by their rarity, then as always. James Freeman Clarke was very much dissatisfied with the mechanical instruction dealt out to him at Harvard, from 1825 to 1829. That a student might do better work if interested in his subject does not seem to have occurred to his professors, for no attempt was ever made, so far as Clarke knew, to rouse any curiosity. Emulation and punishment were the only prods.[2] At Bowdoin conditions were apparently no better. A. S. Packard complains that the classics there were all grammar and syntax; interpretation was scarcely ever attempted. His Greek professor was more interested in walking and exploring and in fruit-raising than in Greek. On a visit to Harvard in search of better things he found, to his disappointment, the same system in vogue there.[3] Andrew D. White considered Yale far superior to Hobart, where he had first attended, and yet the Yale system was distasteful to him.

[1] Leroy J. Halsey, "A Sketch of the Life and Educational Labors of Philip Lindsley, D. D.," reprinted from the *American Journal of Education* for September, 1859.

[2] James Freeman Clarke, *Autobiography, Diary and Correspondence* (Edward E. Hale, ed., Boston, 1891), *passim.*

[3] Cleaveland and Packard, *History of Bowdoin College* (Boston, 1882), p. 88 *et seq.*

With few exceptions, class exercises there consisted of recitation by rote in strict adherence to the text. Literary translations of the ancient masterpieces were not valued, for the emphasis was entirely on syntax, grammar and form. The system "made everything of gerund-grinding and nothing of literature".[1]

While expressions such as these by no means prove a general reaction against the traditional curriculum, they do show considerable discontent with prevailing methods and indicate the existence of a fertile field for the seed of new ideas. These latter were not slow in forthcoming, in fact they had begun to be sown as far back as colonial days. Perhaps the earliest prophet of new ideals was William Smith, Anglican clergyman and first provost of the University of Pennsylvania, whose treatise, *A General Idea of the College of Mirania*,[2] sounds a new note in American educational philosophy. Written in 1753 for the guidance of a group of citizens in New York who were contemplating a college there, *Mirania* was an idealized version of the aims and achievements of the College of Philadelphia (the forerunner of the University of Pennsylvania).

According to Smith's treatise the object of all education is the perpetuation of the existing peace and prosperity by "forming a succession of sober, virtuous, industrious citizens, and checking the course of growing luxury".[3] From its earliest years, therefore, the youth of the country must be educated in common, public schools. This is especially

[1] *Autobiography of Andrew Dickson White* (2 vols., New York, 1905), vol. i, p. 27. *Cf.* the criticism of static conditions in Harvard, Columbia, etc. by Henry Cabot Lodge, G. Stanley Hall and Brander Matthews, as quoted in Allan Nevins, *The Emergence of Modern America* (New York, 1927), p. 264.

[2] "A General Idea of the College of Mirania", appendix II of *Discourses on Public Occasions in America* (London, 1762).

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

necessary in a province like Mirania [Pennsylvania] where linguistic and racial differences will otherwise act as serious disintegrating factors and threaten its harmony and security. For the achievement of these ends the traditional course of study, especially in the colleges, will not do at all. "The object they [the Miranians] kept always in sight, was the easiest, simplest, and most natural method of forming youth to the knowledge and exercise of private and public virtue; and therefore they did not scruple to reject some things commonly taught at colleges, to add others, and shorten or invert the order of others, as best suited their circumstances." [1] And again: "We must not then, said they, bewilder ourselves in the search of truth, in the vast tomes of ancient schoolmen; nor in the more refined speculations of modern metaphysicians, nor yet in the polemic writings of subtle casuists." [2] In other words, Smith is not content with the usual procedure of forcing pupils into the customary mold, but demands that the mold be recast to fit the actual needs of the pupils and of society.

This new form he then proceeds to outline, drawing upon his "reason corrected by revelation" for guidance. Two kinds of courses, he thinks, are obviously demanded, one for those destined for the learned professions and one for the "mechanic professions" and all others. For the second and larger class there is to be a nine-year course, the academy, with English, mathematics, history, natural science, agriculture and chemistry, but no languages. This will be completed at the age of fifteen. The future ministers, lawyers and doctors, after three years in the academy with the others, will enter the Latin school where they will concentrate on the classics and English. Then follows the college proper, consisting of five years, each devoted to a different subject.

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 43.

[2] *Ibid.*

The principal study of the first year will be Greek, of the second mathematics, of the third philosophy, of the fourth rhetoric and poetry, of the fifth agriculture and history. As for logic and metaphysics, to which so much time is devoted in other colleges, " a small space of time serves for these studies, logic in particular, as commonly understood, being in some disrepute among [the Miranians] ".[1] Philosophy, as described by Smith, means the natural sciences and the usual flexible moral philosophy course. He deplores the lack of a good definitive text in this field.

The subjects of the fourth and fifth year are intended to " bring all that has been before taught home to the business of life ".[2] In these two years composition and oratory will be practiced, and the students will be expected to do a good deal of writing and public speaking. Biological and agricultural chemistry will be taught because of its direct practical value and will be followed in the last term by a course of lectures on history, really the philosophy of history. With the leading facts of history the students will by that time be familiar, and the purpose of this final course will be " to review those events in the calm light of philosophy, when related in their full extent, attended with a deduction of their immediate and remote causes and consequences, in order to make them a lesson of ethics and politics, and an useful rule of conduct and manners through life ".[3] It begins with the state of nature, takes up Greek and Roman history in succession, then jumps from Augustus to the sixteenth century and considers modern Europe and especially England. In conclusion the British provinces in America are surveyed and attention is directed to current economic and political conditions.

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 51.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 53.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 65.

Other innovations at Mirania were frequent public exercises at which most of the speeches were in English instead of Latin. Smith held that the ancient languages should be studied to be understood, not reproduced. Then, too, the older practice was not at all considerate of the ladies, who liked to attend these exercises but who understood no Latin. Modern foreign languages, fencing, and dancing, were accomplishments that might be acquired incidentally but would have to be gotten over with before the third college year was begun.

Training in religion and morals, too, was to be conducted differently at Mirania. All set lectures and formal discourses in this field were to be dispensed with, as of doubtful value. Instead, the instructors were to be chosen with an eye to securing men of sterling character and blameless reputation, whose example would be potent in influencing the students for good. When occasion offered in their regular courses, these instructors might drop a casual word of religious or ethical application which would strike much deeper than formal courses in religion ever do. An atmosphere of truth and purity and reverence was thus to be established conducive to the development of genuine piety.

In the execution of his program Provost Smith came nearer to his goal than do most idealists. All the schools that he described were actually founded. Their scope was limited, to be sure; the Latin school, for example, ran for four years instead of five, and the college proper was reduced from five to three. The curriculum in force contained most of the subjects he had recommended.[1] Physics and chemistry were included, agriculture and astronomy, history, government, law and commerce, as well as the languages. Though this pace was not maintained, Pennsylvania Uni-

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 111.

versity in its origin marks a new departure in American college education.

About the time that Mirania was being translated into fact, Samuel Johnson, a minister who had forsaken the Connecticut establishment for the Church of England, was asked to prepare a course of study for a new college in New York City, of which he had been chosen the head. In the resulting "Advertisement" he laid down a program so wide and all-embracing, that his college, now Columbia University, has not encompassed it to this day. Says Johnson:

> The chief Thing that is aimed at in this College is, to teach and engage the Children to know God in Jesus Christ . . . . and to train them up in all virtuous Habits, and all such useful Knowledge as may render them creditable to their Families and Friends, Ornaments to their Country and useful to the public Weal in their Generations. . . .
>
> [The design of this college is] to instruct and perfect the Youth in the Learned Languages, and in the Arts of reasoning exactly, of writing correctly, and speaking eloquently; and in the Arts of numbering and measuring; of Surveying and Navigation, of Geography and History, of Husbandry, Commerce and Government, and in the Knowledge of all Nature in the Heavens above us, and in the Air, Water and Earth around us, and various kinds of Meteors, Stones, Mines, and Minerals, Plants and Animals, and of everything useful for the Comfort, the Convenience and Elegance of Life, in the chief Manufactures relating to any of these Things: And, finally, to lead them from the Study of Nature to the Knowledge of themselves, and of the God of Nature, and their Duty to him, themselves, and one another, and everything that can contribute to their true Happiness, both here and hereafter.[1]

Needless to say, Johnson's program remained an ideal; in

[1] *Charters Acts of the Legislature Official Documents and Records* (of Columbia University, John B. Pine, compiler, New York, 1920), p. 32.

fact, with the exception of an early development of economic and political courses, the curriculum of Columbia did not differ materially from those of its neighbors until the days of Barnard.

With the winning of political independence and the resulting stress upon the patriotic motive in founding colleges there came renewed and more insistent challenges of the old system of instruction. The incongruity between the new objectives of civil leadership in various professions and a course of study that had been worked out centuries ago and was designed primarily for ministers became increasingly apparent. Among the first to heed the challenge was William and Mary. At the suggestion of Thomas Jefferson, then governor of Virginia, and under the able direction of Bishop Madison, its first president under the Republic, this pioneer college of the South enlarged and modernized its curriculum in 1779, added economic, political and historical courses, established departments of medicine and law, and broke through the old rigidity by permitting students to elect certain courses and ignore others.[1] The full significance of these changes was not, however, immediately apparent to the rest of the country, for William and Mary had lost caste during the Revolution. Being identified with the Church of England, the tory church, which was anathema to all good whigs, its example was not apt to be widely followed. In spite of able leadership, therefore, William and Mary suffered a decline, and for most of the period merely vegetated. The influence of its innovations was not nearly so great as their importance warranted.

The first modification of the old system in the North seems to have been made by Union College in Schenectady, where

[1] Lyon G. Tyler, "A Few Facts from the Records of William and Mary College," in *Papers of the American Historical Association,* vol. iv, Oct., 1890.

the trustees in 1802 permitted the substitution of French for Greek by students who were not destined for the learned professions.[1] President Nott, a confirmed advocate of a liberalizing policy, continued and extended this practice, until in 1828 he was able to report to the Regents the existence of a full-fledged parallel course, in which no Latin or Greek were required either for admission or graduation, but modern languages were substituted throughout. Students might stay any length of time and at the end receive a diploma of proficiency. But the A.B. degree was still reserved for those who had completed the regular required four years' course.[2]

Today in retrospect these changes appear trifling enough, but at the time they were almost revolutionary, and coming as they did on the heels of the ultra-conservative Yale report,[3] they seemed to exponents of the old order a calculated rebuff and repudiation of all that had been held wise and good. A chorus of protest arose, chiefly in the orthodox New England colleges. Union was faithless to the old traditions, a renegade; its scholastic and ethical standards were questionable; it was demoralizing higher education. Nott replied with spirit and kept his course.[4]

But the leaven was working in New England too. In the year of the Yale report the faculty of Amherst, where Heman Humphrey was president at the time, demanded a reconsideration of the curriculum.[5] Here again it was the

[1] *Laws of Union College* for 1802. *Cf.* L. F. Snow, *The College Curriculum in the United States* (1907), p. 156.

[2] "The credit of initiating the elective system of studies in colleges [of New York] is due to Dr. Nott, at Union College." Franklin B. Hough, *Historical and Statistical Record of the University of New York* (Albany, 1885), p. 20. *Cf.* C. Van Santvoord, *Memoirs of Eliphalet Nott* (New York, 1876), p. 156.

[3] *Cf. supra*, ch. iii.

[4] Van Santvoord, *op. cit.*, pp. 153, 155.

[5] "Two Reports of the Faculty of Amherst College to the Board of Trustees", 1827. Cited in Snow, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

dead languages that bore the brunt of the attack, for the Amherst manifesto demanded less insistence on these and more on modern languages and history and government. A state department of education was also advocated. About the same time Josiah Quincy was making some changes at Harvard. His inaugural address in 1829 states a mildly progressive position, and by 1841 his views had crystallized to such an extent that he proposed making Latin and Greek elective after the freshman year. Such an arrangement, he contended, would not lower the standards of achievement in these subjects, as its detractors claimed, but would actually raise them. Making a course elective will always insure higher results, for it will naturally be elected only by those who are interested. The indifferent and unfit will drop out and every class will consist of a select group who are taking Latin and Greek not because they have to but because they want to. Such a group can be expected to do much better work and maintain much higher standards than the present classes, held together by compulsion only.[1]

Similar in purpose and far more extensive in amount were the changes brought about at the University of Vermont by its brilliant president, James Marsh. Believing that a liberal education consisted in positive stimulation of all types of mind, Marsh and his faculty completely reorganized the plan of study in this school. Four departments were established, one of English literature, one of languages, one of mathematics and physics, one of political, moral and intellectual philosophy. A student might choose one or more of these departments as his field, but was limited to two unless he showed unusual ability. There were not four distinct classes, nor was any time limit set for the completion of any course. The student could apparently stay indefinitely and take all the

[1] His views are contained in a communication to the Overseers in 1841 (Cambridge, 1841).

courses in succession, if he desired; but to receive the standard A.B. degree he had to complete the usual amount of work in the languages, sciences, and philosophy.

Along with the changes in the curriculum at Vermont came a humanizing of discipline. Rules were reduced to a minimum and were for the most part discarded in favor of a less formal regime that relied chiefly upon personal contact between faculty and students for its success. Like most of the other exponents of change Marsh hoped by his system to break down the rigidity of the traditional curriculum, to furnish more natural motives for study by appealing to the interests of the students, and thus to raise the standards of scholarship and to make education real and alive.[1] Vermont was a small institution where attention to individuals was practicable, and under Marsh and his immediate successors, who were still impelled by his original enthusiasm, the system seems to have been quite fruitful of results.[2]

Most noteworthy among the writings of New England presidents of liberal tendencies are those of Francis Wayland of Brown. The mature views of this successful teacher and administrator, the result of long years of experience at the head of the Baptist college in Providence, are found expressed in a series of treatises brought out mainly in the forties and fifties.[3] Dissatisfaction with conditions at

[1] *System of Instruction ... in the University of Vermont* (Burlington, Vt., 1831).

[2] J. Torrey, *The Remains of the Rev. James Marsh* (Boston, 1843), *passim*.

[3] *Thoughts on the Present Collegiate System in the United States* (Boston, 1842).

Report to the Corporation of Brown University, March 28, 1850 (Providence, 1850).

The Education Demanded by the People of the United States (Boston, 1855).

"Intellectual Education—Its Objects and Methods," address of 1830, reprinted from Barnard's *American Journal of Education* for December, 1863.

Brown and the realization that other New England colleges were meeting their obligations with no greater success led him eventually to re-examine the foundations of the American college system. This determination was strengthened by a visit to the University of Virginia, where he was impressed by the innovations and the freedom from the shackles of academic tradition.[1]

Wayland found the basic trouble with the New England system in the overemphasis on authority and precedent. "God intended us for progress", is his contention, "and we counteract his design when we deify antiquity and bow down and worship an opinion, not because it is either wise or true, but simply because it is ancient."[2] Every new American college copies the medieval English curriculum of classics and mathematics, regardless of the talents of its students or the needs of its constituents. Such a policy is palpably mistaken. The course of instruction should not be unquestionably accepted from the hand of authority as the faith once for all delivered to the saints, but should be intelligently planned and adapted to the wants of the whole community. For "no nation can derive the benefit which God intended from the intellect which he has conferred upon it, unless all that intellect, of what sort soever it be, have the means of full and adequate development".[3]

In an address at Union College in 1854 he reiterated these views and maintained the thesis that the existing system was open to examination and not fixed for all ages. The following extract illustrates the scope and force of his argument:

In a free country like our own, unembarrassed by precedents,

[1] F. and H. L. Wayland, *A memoir of the Life and Labors of Francis Wayland* (2 vols., New York, 1867), vol. ii, p. 92.

[2] *The Education Demanded by the People of the United States.*

[3] *Thoughts on the Present Collegiate System.*

and not yet entangled by the vested rights of by-gone ages, ought we not to originate a system of education which shall raise to high intellectual culture the whole mass of our people? When our systems of education shall look with as kindly an eye on the mechanic as the lawyer, on the manufacturer and merchant as the minister; when every artisan, performing his process with a knowledge of the laws by which it is governed, shall be transformed from an unthinking laborer into a practical philosopher; and when the benign principles of Christianity shall imbue the whole mass of our people with the spirit of universal love,—then, and not till then, shall we illustrate to the nations the blessings of republican and Christian institutions.[1]

To satisfy these various needs the colleges must offer a wider range of courses, emphasizing those that contain fact and information, instead of confining themselves, as heretofore, to those that presumably stimulate the mind. For knowledge as well as mental training is a legitimate object of education; the new sciences must now be ranged beside the classics in every well-balanced program of studies.

With the present century, a new era dawned upon the world. A host of new sciences arose, all holding important relations to the progress of civilization. Here was a whole people in an entirely novel position. Almost the whole nation was able to read. . . . A country rich in every form of capability had just come into their possession . . . all that was needed to develop its resources, was well-directed labor. But labor only can be skillfully directed by science; and the sciences now coming into notice were precisely those which the condition of the country rendered indispensable to success. That such a people could be satisfied with the teaching of Greek, Latin, and the elements of Mathematics, was plainly impossible.[2]

The time-worn argument for the classics as instruments of

[1] *The Education Demanded by the People of the United States.*

[2] *Report to the Corporation of Brown University.*

mental discipline Wayland curtly dismissed as the lazy excuse of a poor teacher. Entirely too much time, he felt, was being devoted to language drill, and with very little to show for it when college graduates could not even construe the Latin on their diplomas. As to taste, imagination, judgment and all the other desirable qualities that the classics were supposed to foster, the reply of this experienced teacher was: perhaps they ought to, but they don't. No longer therefore should they enjoy special privileges, supported by the weight of tradition and authority, but, like every other subject in the curriculum, should be required to stand on their merits alone.

The specific recommendations growing out of these views are found in the *Report to the Corporation of Brown University* of 1850. Briefly summarized, they suggest that in the first place the number of courses that the student is required to pursue at any one time be reduced. This first step is essential in the interest of thoroughness; instead of doing many things superficially, he will now do fewer things well. Then there is to be complete freedom of choice. The student may elect to take as few or as many courses as he desires, with no time limit set for the completion of the college course as a whole. Upon completing and passing examinations in a required number of courses, regardless of their content or of the time consumed, he is to receive the A.B. degree. Advancing beyond Nott and Marsh, who would reserve the degree for those who had adhered to old traditional set of subjects, Wayland proposed to confer it upon all who had completed a definite number of units of work, in any field whatever. By such a series of innovations Wayland hoped to make of Brown an institution that actually met the contemporary needs of its constituents and was in step with the times.

Not all of the critics of the old order were in New Eng-

land. One of the earliest exponents of change, as already indicated, was Thomas Jefferson. Never a college president himself, his influence in the field of higher education was greater than that of most of them. His ardent individualism made itself felt not only in politics and economics, but in matters of learning and culture as well. Equal opportunity through the establishment of the widest possible range of courses, and the right of individual choice by means of a free elective system, were at the center of his thought. As early as 1779 Jefferson had introduced three bills into the Virginia Assembly which provided for a comprehensive system of education from the ground up. There were to be elementary schools, then ten middle colleges or academies, and finally as a capstone of the edifice the College of William and Mary, expanded into a university.[1] Hampered in the execution of his projects at William and Mary because of its sectarian character, he proceeded to agitate the founding of a new state-controlled university, in which he hoped to find full expression for his ideas. As a result of these efforts the University of Virginia was eventually organized, and opened its doors in 1826.[2]

At Virginia the student might choose any one of eight departments as his field of labor; he might enter with little preparation, since there were no uniform entrance requirements; and he might graduate within any length of time, provided only that he had satisfactorily completed the work in the department in which he was enrolled.[3] With its

[1] Jefferson's account of these bills is found in *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (P. L. Ford, ed., 10 vols., New York, 1892), vol. i, p. 66 *et seq.* A summary of his educational plans in general is contained in a letter to George Ticknor, Nov. 25, 1817, *ibid.*, vol. x, p. 94.

[2] Philip A. Bruce, *History of the University of Virginia 1819-1919* (5 vols., New York, 1920), vol. i, *passim.*

[3] The eight schools provided for by the Board of Visitors on Oct. 6, 1824, were: Ancient Languages, Modern Languages, Mathematics, Na-

wide freedom of choice[1] and its insistence on fact and content rather than on form and method, the University of Virginia remained a constant challenge to exponents of the older view, who believed in discipline as the royal road to culture. It has been repeatedly referred to in these pages; the scanty mention it receives here is not an attempt to belittle its importance, which was considerable, but is to be explained by the unusual administrative machinery of this school. Unlike other colleges, it had no regularly elected permanent presidents to govern it and advance its interests, but instead a system of rotating chairmen of the faculty. The movement that it initiated was apparently self-perpetuating; set in motion by Jefferson, it was carried on by the momentum of his prestige. The university boasted no great executives and leaders to champion its cause; perhaps it needed none. It provoked much discussion, both favorable and critical; but its best reply to its detractors was its own continued existence and prosperity.

Scattered through the West and South one finds occasional independent thinkers and progressive leaders in the presidents' chairs, who adapted new ideas and improved methods to the requirements of their institutions and communities. Jasper Adams of Hobart, who was later to go south and raise the College of Charleston out of the rut, was in the main a conservative, yet he commended Hobart's three year English course as meeting the needs of the surrounding farmers and mechanics. At the same time those students who were preparing for the professions were still held to the customary four years of classics and philosophy, for they were to be leaders of men and, in Adams' estimation, could

tural Philosophy, Natural History, Anatomy and Medicine, Moral Philosophy, Law. Not all went into immediate operation. Bruce, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 322.

[1] The choice actually offered the student was that of one of the eight schools. Within the school all work was required.

be trained in no other way.[1] Jonathan Maxcy of South Carolina had broad scholastic interests; as early as 1811 he secured the foundation of a chair of chemistry; he bought physical apparatus; he arranged courses for those who wished to take no Greek or Latin; he introduced French into the curriculum; he urged the establishment of chairs of law and political economy.[2] Maxcy's successor at South Carolina, Thomas Cooper, was primarily interested in the natural and social sciences and arranged his courses accordingly. Cooper's lectures on geology and on political economy seem to have been the most stimulating subjects in the school.[3]

Owing largely to the efforts of Joseph LeConte and other enterprising members of the faculty, the University of Georgia decided in 1859 to discontinue the freshman and sophomore classes entirely and to retain only the last two college years. Schools of medicine, law, engineering and agriculture were projected, with courses leading to higher academic and professional degrees. President Church, an educator of the old school, resigned, and the office of chancellor was created. But before these measures could be carried into execution the Civil War broke out, and the whole plan was frustrated.[4]

Horace Holley, who raised the University of Transylvania in Kentucky into the first rank of western colleges, was a " forward-looking man ", who believed that education should be adjusted to the needs of the times, " much more with a regard for the present, and a prospect of the future, than from a retrospect and remembrance of antecedent times." [5]

[1] *Inaugural Discourse*, 1827 (Geneva, N. Y., 1827).

[2] Trustees' minutes, summarized in E. L. Green, *A History of the University of South Carolina* (Columbia, S. C., 1916), p. 30.

[3] *Ibid.*, ch. iii.

[4] E. M. Coulter, *College Life in the Old South* (New York, 1928), p. 260 *et seq.*

[5] Charles Caldwell, *A Discourse on the Genius and Character of the Rev. Horace Holley* (Boston, 1828), p. 50.

Latin and Greek he considered valuable mainly as a help toward understanding English, the most important study of all. In general he wished to see less slipshod haste in college methods and more depth and accuracy.

In the neighboring state of Tennessee Philip Lindsley was making similar efforts in behalf of the University of Nashville. He too believed that the university should provide educational opportunities for all people and adapt its courses to that end. "Ignorance is the parent of oppression and superstition", he proclaimed in his inaugural address in 1825.[1] "The farmer, the mechanic, the manufacturer, the merchant, the sailor, the soldier, if they would be distinguished in their respective callings, must be educated."[2] Accordingly he outlined a plan, similar to that of the University of Virginia, which provided for six colleges, each with a separate building, refectory, land and instructors, and in addition a shop for mechanics and an experimental farm.[3]

Still another independent pedagogue was Andrew Wylie of Indiana, who maintained a system all his own that he called specialization by rotation. Wylie's students took up one subject at a time, concentrated on that, to the exclusion of all else, until it had been completed, and then passed on to the next. Twenty years of experience and observation confirmed him in the belief that his system was superior to all others.[4]

After the middle of the century, and belonging more properly to the transition period when the ascendancy of the college began to give way before the university, there arose Tappan of Michigan and Barnard of Columbia. The former,

[1] *Inaugural Address* (Nashville, 1825).

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Commencement Address* of 1826 (Nashville, 1832).

[4] Biographical sketch in *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography.*

a man of broad culture and considerable reputation as a scholar and author, was captivated with the Prussian system of education, which he tried to reproduce in Michigan. Calling American colleges mature academies and dismissing all previous attempts to expand them to university proportions as far short of the mark, he set about to create what he considered a genuine university in Michigan by establishing separate faculties in philosophy, literature, medicine and law according to European models. Absolute freedom of choice was to be granted the student, the stimulus for work coming not from superimposed authority, but from the natural interests of the individual student. Self-direction and not compulsion, the independent investigation of new problems and not the ladling out of second-hand facts were to characterize Tappan's institution. For it was motives and methods such as these that distinguished the university from the ordinary college. Discipline, rules and regulations and moral restraint were, in his estimation, but incidental to the main purpose: the discovery of truth. Michigan, then, guided by these principles, was to be the first real university in the United States.[1]

No one better illustrates the progress of educational thought than President Barnard of Columbia, who recapitulates in his person the evolution of nineteenth-century pedagogical ideals.[2] A graduate of Yale, Barnard began his professional career under the spell of President Day's report, and was at first a staunch adherent of the existing order. His paper in defense of the classics, while he was professor at Alabama, has been discussed elsewhere.[3] But when Barnard left Alabama to become president of Missis-

[1] *Inaugural Discourse* (Detroit, 1853). *University Education* (New York, 1851).

[2] John Fulton, *Memoirs of Frederick A. P. Barnard* (New York, 1896).

[3] *Cf. supra*, ch. iii.

sippi he was thrown into closer contact with actual needs and conditions, and soon began to retreat from his former academic position. He would now superimpose professional courses upon the usual compulsory undergraduate work, and in this higher department he would provide a considerable range of subjects, allow some freedom of choice, abolish formal recitations, relax discipline and encourage free discussion.[1] After the outbreak of the Civil War Barnard resigned the presidency of Mississippi and returned north. Appointed president of Columbia in 1866, he experienced a still further change of heart. Older views were now discarded, along with the slaves he had owned in Mississippi, and he began to urge not only the further extension of the elective system, but coeducation and other innovations. The classics had by this time completely fallen from grace. In an address in 1866 on college entrance requirements he contended that Latin and Greek had not achieved what was always being claimed for them, inasmuch as the students never reached the ideas of the ancients, but were occupied to the end of their college course with grammar and syntax. Nor did this process sharpen the mind, since the work was all done from memory and with very little display of judgment. The classics, as taught in American schools and colleges, were not a stimulus but a sedative. Instead of rousing the natural curiosity of young people the constant grind only succeeded in lulling it to sleep. As a remedy Barnard suggested a variation of the program by the substitution, in the lower classes of the secondary schools at any rate, of sciences and modern languages for the customary Latin and Greek. The latter, taken up by maturer students and placed in competition with other subjects, would themselves be enlivened to such an extent that the colleges might then hope to de-

[1] Fulton, *op. cit.*, ch. vii.

velop an occasional graduate who could actually read Latin and Greek.[1]

There were others who contributed ideas and experiments, both within and without the college world, but who cannot be considered here, since the present discussion is not intended as a complete and connected history of higher education during the period. If it were, it would have to be pointed out, among other things, that Quincy's moderate changes at Harvard were not enlarged upon, in fact scarcely maintained, by succeeding presidents until the days of Eliot; that Wayland's innovations at Brown were severely criticized and not permanently successful; that Lindsley did not get his six schools, nor his shops at Nashville; that Wylie's "one-study" plan was abandoned at Indiana after a few year's trial; that Tappan at Michigan was in advance of his time and fell afoul of the trustees. But all that is beyond the scope of the present work. Neither is it the intention to justify or to condemn any of the views here presented. The sole aim is to show the part played by college presidents in the intellectual movements of their time, to depict the rank and file that followed conservative leaders in adherence to the old tradition, and to present the opinions of the smaller group of dissenters and independent thinkers who became the prophets of new ideals.

[1] "The Studies Proper to be Pursued Preparatory to Admission to College," in *Proceedings of the Third Anniversary of the University Convocation of the State of New York* (Albany, 1866).

CHAPTER VI

The Patriot

Ideals, new and old, were not confined to the field of education. Presidents were apt to be voluble and voluminous, and to express themselves on many topics. One note that was sounded oftener than any other in the many treatises and addresses is that of Americanism and democracy. Patriotism and national pride, as was pointed out earlier, was one of the motives for founding colleges, and it was but natural that education as a patriotic duty should continue a favorite topic of discussion. Splendid rhetorical structures could be reared upon this theme and, without questioning the sincerity of the speakers, it must be admitted that the presidents were few who resisted the urge to exploit it. James Madison of William and Mary would never, so it is reported, speak of heaven as a kingdom, but as that great republic where there is no distinction of rank and where all men are free and equal.[1] "Providence has placed us on a lofty and conspicuous eminence", said Lindsley of Nashville. "The eyes of the world are upon us".[2] And again: "We can succeed, in our task of proving self-government feasible and beneficial, only with the aid of the highest degree of education. To meet these needs common schools, academies, and colleges are required."[3] Alonzo Church of Georgia made a similar plea for the establishment of a complete system of

[1] "Education in Colonial Virginia", *William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine*, vol. vi, p. 3.

[2] *Baccalaureate Address* of 1832 (Nashville, 1832).

[3] *Baccalaureate Address* of 1826 (Nashville, 1832).

schools from the grades up to the university. Speaking in 1845, he warned his hearers that unless this were done soon, the democratic equality that had characterized America would give way to economic and social stratification. In Georgia, he maintained, the influence was already at work and, unless checked, would prove highly dangerous to democracy and national safety.[1] Horace Holley at Transylvania stressed the importance of achieving intellectual independence of Europe, to supplement and strengthen the nation's political and economic freedom. Like its crops and manufactures, so American education must be a native product. British slurs will never be silenced until American literary institutions have been raised to a much higher point of efficiency.[2] In Indiana President White of Wabash spoke to his graduates on the duties of educated young men of the west, and pointed out that as college men they had very definite social and political obligations to America in general and the Mississippi valley in particular. At the same time he felt it necessary to warn the young Hoosiers not to enter politics too soon.[3]

This intense national pride, which college presidents, by the way, shared with most of their fellow-citizens, expressed itself in still other ways. Returning from a trip abroad, Provost Mason of Columbia gave voice to his contempt for royalty: "I saw on Sabbath the ceremony of the Royal family going to church. How my soul pitied those splendid miserables".[4] His New York fireside he found preferable

[1] *A Discourse delivered before the Georgia Historical Society* (Savannah, Ga., 1845).

[2] "On Education in the Western States," in appendix of Caldwell, *A Discourse on ... Horace Holley.*

[3] *Baccalaureate Address* of 1842 (Indianapolis, 1842).

[4] Jacob Van Vechten, *Memoirs of John M. Mason* (New York, 1856), p. 450.

to all the palaces in Europe. Francis Wayland's impressions of Europe in the forties were equally unfavorable. The old world was too conservative and socially stratified; improvement and reform of such an ancient ruin was impossible. He was glad that he could return home; glad that he was an American, a Democrat, and a Puritan.[1] It might be added that Wayland suffered from a digestive disturbance during his entire trip.

The American virus did not affect all alike. John Witherspoon, the Scottish preacher, was middle-aged when he came to Princeton, but in the end he developed into an ardent patriotic leader.[2] C. F. W. Walther, founder of a system of Lutheran institutions in the middle west, brought the best traditions of German life and German scholarship with him into the western wilderness; yet he adjusted himself and was content to spend the rest of his life in the land of his adoption.[3] But there were malcontents too. Charles Nisbet, also a preacher from Scotland and a contemporary of Witherspoon, found it very difficulty to adapt himself to American conditions. The ideal of a dead level of equality, in which individual worth and station counted for so little, did not please him at all, and he had very hard words for the demagogues and rabble-drivers who alone, he felt, were really represented in the government. Popular sovereignty he treated with biting sarcasm, and equality as a dangerous subject that should not be agitated.[4]

With a few prominent exceptions the presidents were not conspicuous in the political life of the nation. Some, like

[1] F. and H. L. Wayland, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, ch. 1.

[2] V. L. Collins, *President Witherspoon* (2 vols., Princeton, 1925), *passim.*

[3] *Briefe von C. F. W. Walther* (L. Fuerbringer, ed., 2 vols., St. Louis, 1915), *passim.*

[4] Letters, to Wm. Young, Mar. 16, 1793; to Charles Wallace, Sep. 2, 1790, June 2, 1797.

Dwight of Yale, Hardenbergh of Rutgers, Green of Princeton, and Brown of Georgia, had seen military service during the Revolution, and President Andrews of Kenyon, at the close of the period, in 1861, resigned his position to march a company to the front.[1] Among the figures of national importance there was first of all John Witherspoon of Princeton, leader in New Jersey Whig politics, member of the Continental Congress and signer of the Declaration of Independence. William Samuel Johnson of Columbia headed the Connecticut delegation in the Constitutional Convention and later served as United States Senator from that state. Manning of Brown was active in securing the ratification of the Constitution both in Massachusetts and in Rhode Island. Timothy Dwight threw all of his tremendous influence into the scale to maintain the standing order, which meant Federalist supremacy, in Connecticut. Thomas Cooper was instrumental in crystallizing and formulating the political theories of the South Carolina nullifiers.

Then there was another group to whom the presidency was an incident in the midst of a long and honorable public career. Josiah Quincy of Harvard was one of these. Theodore Frelinghuysen, a prominent social reformer, had been United States Senator, and candidate for the vice-presidency on the same ticket with Henry Clay, before he closed his career as president of Rutgers. Southern states occasionally appointed public men to head their colleges. William Maxwell of Hampden-Sidney was a considerable legal light in Virginia; William C. Preston of South Carolina College is better known to the nation as senator from that state; David Swain had been governor of North Carolina before he began his long administration at the state university. Jared Sparks of Harvard is another example of a man better known for his

[1] Biographical sketch of Andrews in *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography.*

work in other fields than college administration. For this reason some of these otherwise important figures have been rather briefly dealt with in the present work, for, with the exception, perhaps, of Quincy and Swain, they are remembered as legislators, authors, critics, and not primarily as college presidents.[1]

Though not always a participant in public affairs, the college president was often an effusive commentator upon them. Next to the sermon, itself frequently of a political nature, the patriotic oration was his specialty. Interest in public occasions is enhanced by the participation of local celebrities, and if the president of the college could be prevailed upon to contribute a ringing address, the success of the day would seem assured. As a result there exists a considerable literature of election sermons, fourth of July orations and memorial addresses. In the main these discourses breathe the same moral fervor and ardent patriotism as do the educational pronouncements; of critical appraisal of American institutions they contain relatively little; of lukewarm patronizing nationalism, or international-mindedness, still less; and cynicism is altogether absent from their makeup. When Nott compared the work of Washington to that of Moses leading the chosen people to the promised land,[2] and when Quincy stressed the nation's moral obligation to take self-government seriously,[3] they

[1] There were presidents who achieved prominence in other fields too. Samuel Stanhope Smith's biological studies were mentioned in chapter four. Joseph Willard of Harvard was a mathematician of note and held membership in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences from its foundation to the time of his death. He was also an honorary member of the Royal Society of Goettingen and of the Medical Society of London, and shortly before his death was elected a member of the American Philosophical Society at Philadelphia. *Eulogy ... at the Funeral of the Rev. Joseph Willard* (Cambridge, 1804).

[2] Fourth of July address in Albany in 1801.

[3] Fourth of July address in Boston in 1826, at the semi-centennial of independence.

were striking the keynote; their sentiments were those of virtually all the rest. A disgruntled exception like Nisbet only serves to prove the rule.

But whether or not he expressed himself on politics and current affairs in general, his office made it necessary for the president to keep a finger on the public pulse. In the midst of his routine activities he paid as much attention as possible to the events in the outside world as they unfolded themselves beyond the campus gates. Thus Ezra Stiles of Yale kept in touch with affairs, as the terse comments in his diary indicate:

Nov. 24, 1783: Whether any Idea be common to two senses? Seniors.
The Definitive Treaty is arrived at New York.
Nov. 25, 1783: Whether a public be preferable to a private Education? Seniors.
New York evacuated.[1]

Patriotic though the presidents were, there is a good deal of sectional feeling and local pride evident in the writings and actions of some of them. In spite of their position as educators and leaders of men, they were unable in many cases to divest themselves entirely of the prejudices and provincial limitations of their constituents. Seldom narrowly bigoted or fanatical, they nevertheless tended to share the views of the geographic section in which they lived or of the economic and social class to which they belonged. Timothy Dwight, for all his sturdy Americanism, was first of all the champion of New England Federalism. America, to be sure, was the beacon light of humanity. He addressed it in *Greenfield Hill*:

> All hail, thou western world! by heaven design'd
> Th' example bright, to renovate mankind.[2]

[1] *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles* (F. B. Dexter, ed., 3 vols., New York, 1901), vol. iii, p. 99.

[2] *Greenfield Hill* (New York, 1794), part ii, line 707.

But what America was to Europe, that New England was to America, and Connecticut to New England. In the same poem Dwight painted a lurid picture of European depravity as contrasted with the virtues of his state. European jails and gallows are full, whereas Connecticut has scarcely a criminal. Unbelief and immorality are the fashion in the old world, but Connecticut is profoundly religious and exalts the Christian ministry.[1] The same sentiments pervade his *Travels in New-England and New-York*. A New England village was to him "one of the most delightful prospects which this world can afford".[2] New England is freer, wealthier, more cultured, and more healthful than any other section of the country. When in the course of his travels he crossed the line into New York, the soil at once grew poorer, the people slovenly, the inns dirty, and the rivers so muddy that even the horses refused to drink out of them.[3] In the event of the ultimate dissolution of the union, a possibility that he seemed to view with a good deal of equanimity, Dwight felt certain that a northeastern confederacy would be able to exist quite comfortably and happily.[4]

Equally complacent views feature the public statements of men like Quincy of Harvard and Backus of Hamilton. The former's oration at the two-hundredth anniversary of the founding of Boston, for example, stresses New England's

[1] *Greenfield Hill*, part i.

[2] *Travels in New-England and New-York*, preface.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 456.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 513. A young Virginian studying at Yale in 1814 commented in a letter to a friend on the disunionist sentiments in New England and added: "His Excy Dr. Dwight is most grossly infected by this raging political epidemick and instead of resisting the current of this pestilential malady he is borne willingly along . . . but what of him? he is nothing to us so I'll let him rest." "Glimpses of Old College Life", *William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine*, vol. viii, p. 4.

mission as the light of the world;[1] and Backus in his inaugural address at Hamilton in 1812 made the following confession of faith: "I am partial to the institutions of Connecticut and New-England generally; because I conceive them to be the only materials that will feed the perpetual fire on the altar of civil liberty; the grand arcana of practical republicanism."[2]

Other presidents reflect Federalist or Republican views in keeping with their origin or the sentiment of their community. Eliphalet Nott's baccalaureate addresses during the second war with Great Britain, though guarded in tone, betray a lack of sympathy with the administration and its policies.[3] He regrets the coming of war but admonishes his hearers as Christians to obey the laws made by the majority, even when these are distasteful or oppressive. At the same time he reminds them that in the Constitution they have a safeguard of their rights:

> In the worst of times, and however you may differ with respect to men and measures, still cling to the Constitution; cling to the integrity of the union; cling to the institutions of your country. These, under God, are your political ark of safety; the ark that contains the cradle of liberty in which you were rocked; that preserves the vase of Christianity in which you were baptized; and that defends the sacred urn where the ashes of your patriot fathers moulder. Cling, therefore, to this ark, and defend it while a drop of blood is propelled from your heart, or a shred of muscle quivers on your bones. Triumph as the friends of liberty, of order, of religion, or fall as martyrs.[4]

Whether the martyrdom was being prepared by the British or

[1] Edmund Quincy, *Life of Josiah Quincy of Massachusetts* (Boston, 1867), p. 444 *et seq.*

[2] *Inaugural Discourse*, 1812 (Utica, N. Y., 1812).

[3] *Commencement Address* of 1812, for example.

[4] *Ibid.*

the Jeffersonians, is not clear to the modern reader of the address. No doubt Nott's hearers understood him.

Not all were as cautious as the president of Union. Along with many another minister John Mason, later provost of Columbia, had felt it his duty in 1800 to warn his people against Thomas Jefferson and French ways and beliefs. In a sermon, *The Voice of Warning to Christians on the Ensuing Election of a President of the United States,* he launched a vigorous attack on Jefferson because of the latter's alleged atheism. Dire things will happen to the country if this confirmed infidel is elected, who disbelieves in the deluge, speculates on the possible diverse racial origin of man, and claims that it neither picks his pocket nor breaks his leg whether his neighbor believes in twenty gods or none. Not always fair in his charges, Mason at times impugned Jefferson's motives and cast doubt upon his morals by sly innuendo.[1] Similar sentiments are expressed in another sermon of Mason's, as reported by one who heard it.

> Send us, if Thou wilt, murrain upon our cattle, a famine upon our land, cleanness of teeth in our borders; send us a pestilence to waste our cities; send us, if it please Thee, the sword to bathe itself in the blood of our sons, but spare us, Lord God most merciful, spare us that direst and most dreadful of all Thy curses—an alliance with Napoleon Bonaparte.[2]

Jonathan Maxcy, while president of Brown, was no less eloquent in his denunciation of French leveling influences. In a Fourth-of-July address in 1799 he expressed his sentiments about them:

> Let us for a moment contemplate the magical, wonder-working

[1] "The Voice of Warning to Christians," in *The Complete Works of John M. Mason* (E. Mason, ed., 4 vols., New York, 1850), vol. iv, p. 528 *et seq.*

[2] Quoted in the biographical sketch in *Appleton's Cyclopaedia.*

word—"Equality". This, in the French cavalcade of death, is harnessed up behind liberty. That fair goddess is with reluctance dragged into the train, and thrust forward, that her charms may introduce the infernal procession which troops behind her.[1]

He goes on to denounce the proposition that men are, or ought to be, on an equal footing economically and socially, for in the field of physical and mental attainments this is obviously not the case.

Men of such views did not fare so well when they strayed south. During the war of 1812 President Chapman of North Carolina, an ardent Federalist, had considerable difficulty in maintaining his position. His home was damaged, his gate tarred and feathered, and he received anonymous letters threatening him with physical violence. Administrative disorders growing out of this difference of political opinions, followed by suspensions and student revolts, eventually led to Chapman's resignation.[2] President Caldwell of the same institution, a New Jersey Presbyterian, was less fanatical and also an abler executive. Besides, Caldwell was formidable in debate; not content with defending his college against scurrilous attacks, he took the offensive and drove his critics to cover with logic and invective. He warned a group of hostile politicians: "The stupidity of your politics shall be known. . . . The grave may open to you a retreat from public anger and contempt."[3] On another occasion he accused political foes of the university of fearing that educated men might replace them in their positions, their "seats

[1] *The Literary Remains of the Rev. Jonathan Maxcy* (New York, 1844), p. 387.

[2] Kemp P. Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina* (2 vols., Raleigh, N. C., 1907), vol. i, p. 240.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 147.

of elevation, leaving them at home to drink their whiskey until they are besotted ".[1]

Almost as unwelcome as Chapman among the Republicans of North Carolina, was an aggressive Jeffersonian in the orthodox precincts of Yale. Josiah Meigs, a professor at Yale, admired French democracy and despised all things British. Openly proclaiming his republican sentiments, he became suspect to the authorities to such a degree that only an apologetic and conciliating explanation on his part, together with a profession of love for the Constitution, saved him from outright discharge.[2] In time Meigs left Yale and went south, to become first president of the University of Georgia in 1801. His wife asserted later that Timothy Dwight and the latter's brother Theodore had hounded him out of Yale for no other reason than his stern democracy.[3] In Georgia Meigs found himself in more congenial surroundings. Though the equipment of the school was most primitive, he set to work with high hopes to fashion it into a university. Within a few years however, his troubles began anew. For one thing, Meigs was not converting the university into a Yale or Harvard quickly enough to suit the impatient Georgians; and then too the aggressive character of his "stern democracy", reenforced by a sharp tongue, was again raising up enemies for him among the authorities. Accused, among other things, of calling the trustees "a damned pack of tories and speculators",[4] he soon afterwards severed connections with the university. Meigs now turned for aid to Jefferson, who on a previous occasion had commended his efforts to establish at Georgia a center of sciences and of republican principles, and was rewarded for his loyalty

[1] Battle, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 146.

[2] Wm. M. Meigs, *Life of Josiah Meigs* (Philadelphia, 1887), p. 38.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 42.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 54.

with a position in the civil service, becoming Surveyor-General, and eventually Commissioner of the General Land Office.[1]

Meigs' career furnishes a glimpse of the shifting political currents of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which involved not only professional politicians and statesmen, but clergymen, scientists and educators as well. Institutions under the sway of the deistic and republican philosophy that radiated from Jefferson felt it incumbent upon them to proclaim these principles in their courses, just as New England college presidents tended to make their schools nuclei for the strengthening and propagation of the truths they held sacred. The real purpose of his lectures on government at William and Mary, said President John A. Smith, was the promulgation of genuine republicanism. "From the only political chair in the Union, the purest principles of republicanism should undoubtedly be promulgated."[2] Jefferson himself, with all his ardor for *Lehr- und Lernfreiheit,* made one exception to this principle in his plans for the University of Virginia. While the professors of the various departments there were normally permitted to arrange their courses and choose their texts, the books for use in the Law department were selected by Jefferson and Madison, for Federalist notions and principles were under no circumstances to be taught, even academically, in his university.[3]

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 60. Jefferson's religious liberalism was a stumbling block to the Presbyterian founders of Jefferson College in western Pennsylvania, who had pious doubts about naming the college after an infidel. But, as the historian of the institution surmises, they probably decided that Jefferson's resistance to the "unrighteous excise laws [whisky tax] of the General Government" entitled him to the honor. Joseph Smith, *History of Jefferson College* (Pittsburgh, 1857), p. 56.

[2] J. A. Smith, *A Syllabus of the Lectures Delivered to the Senior Students in the College of William and Mary on Government* (Philadelphia, 1817), preface.

[3] Bruce, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 327.

Similar phenomena are observable later in the period. While president of South Carolina College Thomas Cooper, belligerent anti-federalist, identified himself with what became the ruling faction of the state. Through his pamphlets and addresses he rose to be the acknowledged schoolmaster of the extreme state-rights advocates, going so far as to urge his hearers on one occasion to calculate the value of the Union.[1] In view of their social heritage and environment it is not astonishing to find Nott of Union, Wayland of Brown, Mahan of Oberlin and Blanchard of Knox inveighing against slavery, nor does one marvel, on the other hand, to discover among the authors of the classic *Pro-Slavery Argument* a president of William and Mary, Thomas Dew.[2] In his history course Dew took occasion to argue from the analogy of the wars of the French Revolution against the danger of interfering with the domestic institutions of any country. High-minded people, he contended, will resent all such "impertinent propagandism"[3] from abroad—abroad apparently meaning the North. Again it was a college president in a border state, John C. Young of Centre College in Kentucky, who offered a solution to this problem in the form of a plan for the instruction and gradual emancipation of the slaves.[4] All sectional agitation for special privileges, as banks, tariffs, and internal improvements, was in the opinion of Philip Lindsley of Nashville attributable to a lack of information. The occasion for his remarks was the crisis over nullification in

[1] Dumas Malone, *The Public Life of Thomas Cooper* (New Haven, Conn., 1926), pp. 282, 309, and *passim*.

[2] Harper, Hammond, Simms and Dew, *The Pro-Slavery Argument* (Philadelphia, 1853).

[3] *A Digest of the Laws, Customs, Manners and Institutions of the Ancient and Modern Nations* (New York, ed. of 1856).

[4] *An Address to the Presbyterians of Kentucky, proposing a Plan for the Instruction and Emancipation of their Slaves* (Newburyport, Mass., 1836).

1832, and the remedy he suggested was more education. That alone will enable people to view these questions objectively and to rise above the cheap demagoguery of professional politicians.[1]

Though inclined at times to take on the color of their class or section, college presidents were not lacking in positive contributions to political and economic thought. Without being exactly original thinkers a number of them displayed considerable acumen and expressed constructive ideas in their writings. Dwight's *Travels,* in contrast to the bombastic nature of some of his other works, abound in sound criticism of American institutions and concrete suggestions for their improvement.[2] Caldwell of North Carolina urged his state to take up internal improvements, especially the building of railroads.[3] The chapters on economics and politics in the various moral philosophy treatises have been discussed in an earlier chapter.[4] Of entire works dealing with these subjects, Wayland's and Cooper's textbooks of political economy are worth mentioning.[5] Both are discussions of economic theory and practice, intended primarily for their students, and then for the public. Neither lays claim to originality, but each reflects the doctrines of the British classical economists. Cooper especially makes his work a vehicle for his fierce individualism and applies his theories to the political situation in South Carolina. A doctrinaire upholder of state sovereignty, he becomes sufficiently concrete to castigate the

[1] *Baccalaureate Address* of 1832.

[2] Vol. iii, p. 264; vol. iv, p. 22; and *passim.*

[3] Battle, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 412.

[4] *Cf. supra*, ch. iv.

[5] Thomas Cooper, *Lectures on the Elements of Political Economy* (Columbia, S. C., 1826; ed. used that of London, 1831).

Francis Wayland, *The Elements of Political Economy* (New York, 1837).

"dreadful ignorance" displayed by the Adams-Clay administration.[1] Wayland expounds essentially the same economic theories, but more objectively and with less invective. He, too, is an individualist, an exponent of *laisser-faire,* and as such he opposes protective tariffs and federal meddling with business generally.

In view of all the foregoing it is not too much to say that the old time college president participated actively, and often effectively, in the civilization of his time. In reconstructing him in word and deed the student obtains a cross-sectional view of American intellectual life. The significant movements of the day in education, politics, economics, and religion, pass in review before his eye. For the president was no recluse, but stood up in the arena and fought the good fight of faith—whatever that faith might be. And his office gave weight to his views. The guardian of a city set on a hill, he could not, if he would, hide his light beneath a bushel. His utterances on the tariff, slavery, or the disciplinary value of Latin were listened to, if not with approval, at any rate with attention. The advanced thinkers, to be sure, were in the minority among college presidents as they are in any other social group. In the main the college heads were a conservative gentry. What advance there was during the period came as a result of constant prodding and pulling on the part of the Notts and the Waylands, the Holleys and the Lindsleys. Aside from natural inertia two causes seem to have chiefly contributed to their conservatism. For one thing, the presidents were the guardians of vested interests and inherited traditions. A going concern like the average American college had apparently much more to lose than to gain by adopting all manner of innovations. But an even stronger deterrent to radical thought and action was the

[1] Cooper, *op. cit.*, p. 348.

profession to which most of the presidents belonged. For with very few exceptions they were clergymen. So universally was this the case, so deep and lasting the influence of the clerical habit, that the picture of the old-time college president would be incomplete without a glimpse of his activities as a religious leader.

CHAPTER VII

The Religious Leader

College administration, it has been said, is an art and not a profession. This was true to an even greater degree a century ago. One did not, in those days, prepare for a teaching or executive position in a college as for a life's calling; such an honor came to one as a result of distinguished service in other fields; one other, as a rule: that of theology. For college presidents were clergymen; the office was a byproduct, one of the numerous offspring of that earliest and most prolific profession in America, the ministry. In a day when higher education was primarily a function of the church, it was but natural that the latter should draw teachers and presidents for its institutions of learning from the ranks of the clergy. By the time that state and private initiative began to supplement that of the religious denominations, the custom had become so firmly established that it continued with little change, carried on by its own momentum. Two-hundred-sixty-two of two-hundred-eighty-eight pre-Civil-War presidents, more than nine-tenths of the whole, were ordained ministers.[1] Of the twenty-six laymen every one entered office after 1776. The colonial period did not produce a single lay college president. True, John Leverett, president of Harvard from 1708 to 1724, is sometimes considered the first layman to obtain such an office. But Leverett had been trained for the ministry and had preached on several

[1] Memoirs, biographies, biographical dictionaries, college catalogs and histories furnished most of the data from which these totals were compiled.

occasions, when he gave up divinity for law.[1] The first lay president in the full sense of the word was John Wheelock of Dartmouth, who assumed office in 1779. Then followed William Samuel Johnson of Columbia, in 1787. The next was John McDowell, of Pennsylvania, in 1803. Josiah Quincy, in 1829, was the first layman to obtain the presidency of Harvard. Both McDowell and Quincy were again followed by a line of clerical presidents. Columbia, too, returned for a time to theological control after Johnson's administration, but definitely established the secular tradition with the accession of William Duer in 1829, followed by Moore, King and Barnard, all laymen. South Carolina apparently adopted a similar policy, for beginning with the appointment of Thomas Cooper in 1821 the majority of its presidents were non-clerical. William and Mary after 1814 had as many lay as clerical presidents. Elsewhere the college executive who had not been a minister or at least had not had theological training was the rare exception. And the ratio of clergymen to laymen varied little. In 1850, as in 1800, it was about ten to one.

The religion of the overwhelming majority of these men was of course Protestantism, and more specifically Calvinism.[2] In numbers the Presbyterians led with seventy-seven. There were fifty-five Congregationalists and an additional dozen or more who had originally been Congregationalists but affiliated with the Presbyterians on the basis of agreements such as the Plan of Union, of 1801, between the Con-

[1] *A Memoir, Biographical and Genealogical, of Sir John Leverett, Knt., Governor of Massachusetts, 1673-9; of Hon. John Leverett, F.R.S., Judge of the Supreme Court, and President of Harvard College; and of the Family Generally* (Boston, 1850), p. 115 and *passim.*

[2] On the number and influence of Roman Catholic college *cf. supra,* ch. i. *Cf.* F. P. Cassidy, *Catholic College Foundations and Development in the United States 1677-1850* (Catholic University publication, Washington, D. C., 1924).

necticut Association and the Presbyterian General Assembly.[1] The numbers of this latter group may have been somewhat larger, for the original affiliation of a number of Presbyterian presidents was not determined with certainty. The Reformed Church contributed twelve to the total. Altogether, 156 of the 262 clergymen counted represented Calvinistic Protestantism in the narrower sense of the word. The doctrinal systems of these three bodies, both in theory and in their practical manifestations, were very much alike; there was a free interchange of pulpits among them and, all in all, they can be considered a fairly homogeneous group. A few of the western presidents, as Bishop of Miami and Blanchard of Knox, were involved in controversies that grew out of the incompatibility between Scottish formalism and the New England crusading spirit, but these were exceptions.[2]

The thirty Baptist and twenty-eight Methodist presidents represented related forces. Despite their historical opposition to the Massachusetts establishment many Baptists were Calvinists. The moral philosophy treatise of Francis Wayland, greatest of Baptist presidents, probably had wider acceptance in other institutions than any similar American text. Presidents of Methodist colleges represented that element in the Methodist church which had come to realize the shortsightedness of a policy that made everything of consecration and nothing of education, and whose insistence on more and better schools was bringing its church into closer intellectual alignment with the older Protestant bodies. On the frontier the denominations clashed at times. Thus Peter Cartwright, Methodist exhorter, heaped ridicule upon

[1] R. E. Thompson, *A History of the Presbyterian Churches in the United States* (New York, 1895), p. 72.

[2] *Ibid.*, ch. xi, *passim*, for an account of the split between old and new school Presbyterians.

Julian Sturtevant of Illinois College, for reading his formal discourse instead of preaching in the approved Methodist style.[1] But in the sermons and speeches of prominent Baptist and Methodist presidents such as Maxcy, Wayland, Olin and Simpson sharp doctrinal differences are submerged beneath the common purpose of moral and religious training for the youth of the country.[2] Olin's public sermons, for example, are more Methodist in substance than his addresses to his students.

The thirty-nine Episcopalians were distributed chiefly among Columbia, William and Mary, Trinity and Kenyon. At Harvard the Unitarian influence made itself felt with the accession of Kirkland, and continued under Walker. But that too was really an urbane Puritanism, with the teeth drawn, but with practical objectives unchanged.[3] Four Lutherans, presiding over colleges erected by citizens of German extraction in Pennsylvania and in the Mississippi valley, complete the list.

In considering the theological system that these men accepted and promulgated, it must be borne in mind that their peculiar office did not necessarily lead them to approach religious questions from an original angle. While the exigencies of the position did perhaps tend to soften and modify an all too rigid sectarianism, yet anything like groupmindedness on this point, or theological class consciousness, did not exist among them. There was no religion of the college

[1] Julian Sturtevant, *Autobiography* (New York, 1896), p. 161.

[2] Wayland admitted that he was not interested in interdenominational disputes. F. and H. L. Wayland, *A Memoir of the Life and Labors of Francis Wayland* (2 vols., New York, 1867), vol. i, p. 419; vol. ii, p. 63.

[3] *Cf.* President Walker's *Sermons Preached in the Chapel of Harvard College* (Boston, 1861), as an attempt to smooth the rough edges and to restate the old truths in form acceptable to the cultured taste. The same purpose is apparent in his sermon at the induction of Dr. Huntington as professor of Christian Morals, in 1855.

president as such; he rather reflected the theological views of the denomination in which he held membership and whose interests he served. It was but natural that every denomination should select the abler and more prominent of their clergy to preside over their institutions of higher learning. Keen dogmaticians are therefore found in the ranks of the presidents, powerful controversialists, persuasive orators, and models of personal piety.

Foremost among the defenders of the faith stands Timothy Dwight. More than any other single individual this champion of orthodoxy helped turn back the rising tide of deism and materialism and bring about a revival of old-fashioned religion. Beginning with his students at Yale soon after his accession in 1795, he hammered away at infidelity in sermons, addresses and class lectures, and soon effected so thoroughgoing a reformation that scepticism became disreputable at Yale, and students who had been in the habit of changing their names for those of French deists now formed societies to pray for one another.[1]

Dwight's *magnum opus* was a four-volume series of doctrinal sermons, *Theology Explained and Defended,* in which the Protestant system of doctrine is presented in logical sequence and with fullest detail. A Calvinist by birth and persuasion, Dwight does not go to the extremes of some of the earlier New England theologians. The Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, for example, though maintained and defended against Arminian objections, does not occupy the center of the discussion, in fact one senses an attempt to minimize its implications. Among the points chiefly stressed are the harmony between human reason and the Bible, the

[1] Memoir of Dwight in his *Theology Explained and Defended, in a Series of Sermons* (4 vols., New Haven, Conn., 1843), vol. i, p. 20.

Horace Holley was a member of a praying group. Charles Caldwell, *A Discourse on the Genius and Character of the Rev. Horace Holley* (Boston, 1828), p. 128.

nature of Christ, of the atonement, of faith, and the duty of Sabbath-observance.

In addition to this series, many occasional sermons and addresses, as well as poems and essays, were utilized to achieve the same end. *Greenfield Hill* and the *Travels* abound in warnings against infidelity and in benevolent approval of those who retain their simple piety. Logic, oratory, wit and ridicule all served Dwight's purpose. In *The Triumph of Infidelity,* for example, he tries to reduce to absurdity the arguments of a materialistic philosopher:

> Who taught, the soul of man was made of mud:
> Cold mud was virtue; warmer mud was sin;
> And thoughts the angle-worms, that crawl'd within.[1]

The results of this campaign were commensurate with the efforts of its prime mover. As a consequence of Dwight's preaching infidelity ceased to be fashionable or even reputable in Connecticut.[2] Dwight himself could say in his *Travels,* "In New England the name infidel proverbially denotes an immoral character",[3] a remark that incidentally sheds light on the weapons used in the crusade.

It was not Dwight's work alone that brought about such far-reaching results. A host of clergymen entered the fray and rushed to join in the attack on the deists. Among college executives active in the campaign may be mentioned John Mason, theological professor in New York and for a time provost of Columbia College. This eloquent preacher

[1] *The Triumph of Infidelity* (1788).

[2] Biographical sketch of Dwight in W. B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit* (8 vols., New York, 1860), vol. ii, p. 23. Lyman Beecher comments similarly: before Dwight came, the college was in a most ungodly state. After six months of his preaching infidelity skulked and hid its head. *Autobiography... of Lyman Beecher* (2 vols., New York, 1865), vol. i, p. 43.

[3] Vol. iv, p. 361.

and editor made his *Christian's Magazine*[1] a vehicle for telling polemics against the rationalism of the deists on the one hand and the ritualism of the Anglicans on the other. "Poetry will not quiet a troubled conscience", was his contention, but only heartfelt convictions and a living faith in the merits of Christ.[2]

By constant pounding the embattled evangelicals won the day, not only in Yale and Connecticut, but in New York and New Jersey, in Kentucky and Tennessee. Deists and liberals, if not actually crushed, were everywhere placed on the defensive. Harvard, to be sure, entered the Unitarian camp, but judging from expressions of its presidents its radicalism was of a mild, conciliatory variety, and, besides, Harvard's influence in the country at large was relatively limited.[3] It became the custom for churches to appoint regular days of prayer for educational institutions.[4] College after college experienced religious revivals. An educational periodical in 1831 carried reports of such affairs from institutions as widely scattered as Bowdoin, Kenyon, North Carolina, Williams and Georgia.[5] All speak of seasons of refreshing, outpourings of the spirit, awakening of Christian consciousness, and a higher tone of piety among the students. The same journal in the following year reported, as the result of a survey, that 683 of 3582 students in fifty-

[1] His articles on the episcopacy are found in vol. iii of *The Writings of the Late John M. Mason* (4 vols., New York, 1832).

[2] "Hints on the Insufficiency of the Light of Nature," *ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 405 *et seq.*

[3] *Cf. supra*, p. 96, note, on the number of Harvard graduates among college presidents. *Cf.* C. F. Thwing, *The American College in American Life* (New York, 1897).

[4] *Quarterly Register and Journal of the American Education Society* for Feb., 1831, p. 240, vol. iii, no. 3.

[5] *Ibid.*, vol. iv, no. 2.

nine colleges were "hopefully pious." [1] Indiana Asbury, in 1847, enjoyed a two weeks' revival of such intensity that for the entire period recitations were practically suspended.[2]

Results were not slow in showing themselves. As early as 1805 President Nott could refer to the recent unsuccessful attempts of sceptics to undermine the religion of the country.[3] Lindsley of Nashville expressed his satisfaction at this happy turn of events in his commencement address in 1826: "Happily, the reign of atheism has passed away, and the fopperies of infidelity are no longer in fashion." [4] Ashbel Green's sorrow at having been the only professing Christian at Princeton during his student days was [5] turned to joy when he was privileged to contribute materially to the founding of Princeton Seminary, which was established, among other things, to keep the college and its president on the strait and narrow path of orthodoxy.[6] Thomas Cooper, perhaps the ablest scientist in the country, found it difficult to obtain a position in any college because of his religious liberalism. Not even the tremendous influence of Jefferson was sufficient to overcome the opposition of the Protestant clergy of Virginia to Cooper's appointment at the state university. Cooper was finally placed at South Carolina, but his whole administration there was an almost continuous round of bickerings with the conservative clergy of that state.[7] Horace Holley's

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. iv, no. 3.

[2] Geo. R. Crooks, *The Life of Bishop Matthew Simpson* (New York, 1890), p. 164.

[3] *Commencement Address* of 1805.

[4] *Commencement Address* of 1826.

[5] Joseph H. Jones, ed., *The Life of Ashbel Green* (New York, 1849), p. 133.

[6] V. L. Collins, *Princeton* (New York, 1914), p. 114.

[7] Dumas Malone, *The Public Life of Thomas Cooper* (New Haven, Conn., 1926), *passim*.

dream of making Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky, a center of liberal culture was shattered by sectarian opposition. A Boston Unitarian, Holley proposed to establish his view of Christianity, which he based, as he said, not on Scotland or Cambridge or Saybrook, but on the Bible. It was his intention, he said, to preach Christ and not Calvin or Arminius. Such a program made him gravely suspect to his Presbyterian neighbors, and after nine years of opposition they finally succeeded, in 1827, in bringing about his resignation.[1]

Generally speaking, the first half of the nineteenth century was a period of religious conservatism in the colleges and among their presidents. If any of the latter held more advanced views, they were usually careful, in the interests of harmony, not to make an issue of them. The growing conservatism of the moral philosophy lectures has been noted in a previous chapter.[2] As late as 1869 former president Lord of Dartmouth could sum up a life-time of experience in a warning to the alumni to avoid rationalism, the worst enemy of Christianity, and to submit their reason to the authority of God in the Bible.[3]

A discussion of the theological writings of college presidents, or of theological controversies and similar activities in which they engaged, is beyond the scope of the present work. A number of the men, it is true, contributed to the religious literature of their time or were active in shaping the destinies of their denomination. In most of these cases, however, it would be more accurate to say that this or that religious leader or controversialist happened at one time or another to

[1] R. and J. Peter, *Transylvania University* (Louisville, Ky., 1896), p. 123 and *passim*.

[2] *Cf. supra*, p. 118.

[3] *A Letter to the Alumni of Dartmouth College, on its Hundredth Anniversary* (New York, 1869).

preside over a college. Brief mention of a few of these will therefore suffice. Ashbel Green, pastor in Philadelphia, stood high in the councils of the Presbyterian church; he also attempted for eleven years to make Princeton the home of God-fearing young gentlemen.[1] President Day of Yale wrote learned treatises on the freedom of the will and commentaries on Edwards' *Inquiry*.[2] Edward Beecher, first president of Illinois College, polemicized against Rome and also wrote a ponderous disquisition on total depravity, whose many editions attest its popularity.[3] Stephen Olin's pen was all his life active in the cause of Methodism. A prominent educator, he presided over Randolph-Macon and later over Wesleyan. George Junkin, president of Lafayette and of Miami, was a militant conservative, and deeply involved in the quarrels that led to the expulsion, in 1837, of the new lights from the Presbyterian General Assembly.[4] Hezekiah Balch, pioneer educator on the Tennessee frontier, and organizer of Greeneville College, was such an earnest searcher after truth that he was cited sixteen times before the local presbytery, four times before synod, and once before the General Assembly.[5]

Interdenominational bickerings notwithstanding, on one point they were all agreed. Methodist or Presbyterian, Episcopalian or Catholic, they all insisted, as pedagogues and clergymen, that only that education is genuine which includes training in morality and religion. Without a sensi-

[1] Joseph H. Jones, *op. cit.*; V. L. Collins, *op. cit.*

[2] *An Inquiry Respecting the Self-Determining Power of the Will or Contingent Volition* (New Haven, 1838). *An Examination of President Edwards' Inquiry on the Freedom of the Will* (New Haven, Conn., 1841).

[3] *The Conflict of Ages* (Boston, 1853).

[4] Thompson, *op. cit.*, chs. x, xi.

[5] This was his own count, as given in the biographical sketch in Sprague's *Annals*, vol. iii, p. 308.

tive conscience to direct its energies a trained mind is not only useless, but actually dangerous. Knowledge directed toward moral ends; intelligence motivated by the principles of religion, that was the universal educational ideal. Hence the all-embracing course in moral philosophy; hence the painstaking attempts to harmonize philosophy, science and religion; hence the almost monotonous repetition of this theme in sermons, inaugurals and commencement addresses. Descending at times to the barest platitudes, uttered—one cannot but feel—because something of the sort was expected, the very mass and frequency of these expressions makes them impressive.[1] And not all contented themselves with glittering generalities. In developing the theme: man is susceptible of moral no less than intellectual improvement, Nott devoted an entire commencement address to a discussion of gambling and card-playing.[2] Dwight suggested, in a course of lectures in composition and rhetoric, that novel-reading in itself may not be wrong, provided the novels read promote peace, morality, and the interests of mankind.[3] At the same time he felt it his duty to issue a most urgent warning against the stage, and against all encouragement of, and association

[1] Of those who expressed this thought in one form or another, there may be mentioned: John C. Young, in his inaugural address at Centre College in Kentucky; Stephen Chapin, president of Columbian (George Washington, in Washington, D. C.), in a masonic address; Homer Clark, president of Allegheny; Nathan Lord, president of Dartmouth, in his farewell baccalaureate in 1863; Charles White in his inaugural at Wabash.

John Witherspoon's chief object at Princeton was "to unite together piety and literature". Quoted in V. L. Collins, *President Witherspoon*, vol. ii, p. 198.

"Catholic educators have always held that knowledge for its own sake is worthless. The end of all science should be to purify and ennoble". Cassidy, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

[2] *Commencement Address* of 1814.

[3] A student's notes of Dwight's course in rhetoric and composition, 1807.

with, actors, who as a class were " a nuisance in the earth, the very offal of society ".[1] Kirkland of Harvard recommended systematic reading to his students, to include in the first place the texts for class, then religious books, and finally works of a lighter and more amusing kind, such as fiction, poetry, history, biography and oratory.[2]

Titles of students' commencement speeches testify to the same spirit, if not in the students themselves, at any rate in the faculty members who suggested them. The purity of the ideal of Christianity—evidence of its divine origin; man by nature formed to be virtuous; the glaring stupidity and pernicious consequences of scepticism; these are fair samples.[3] Students and teachers, presidents and trustees, were all ringing the changes on the same theme. In the midst of such universal insistence on virtue and duty it is actually refreshing to find so good a Christian as President Olin of Randolph-Macon admitting the validity of curiosity, plain unadulterated curiosity, as a motive for higher learning. If a student finds within himself a natural bent toward any kind of intellectual activity, says Olin, by all means let him " cultivate it sedulously, and follow it joyfully." [4] One looks long for a repetition of such sentiments.

Religious beliefs and moral standards were, of course, both grounded in the Scriptures. Acceptance of the Bible at face value was not fraught with serious intellectual difficulties in the days of Dwight and Wayland, for the scientific hypotheses that were to challenge the belief in Scriptural literalness were still largely in the future. In the first decade

[1] *An Essay on the Stage* (ed. London, 1824), p. 101.

[2] Alexander Young, *A Discourse on the Life and Character of the Rev. John Thornton Kirkland* (Boston, 1840), p. 100.

[3] Selected from students' graduation addresses at Brown and Rutgers.

[4] " The Theory and Practice of Scholastic Life ", in *Works*, vol. ii, p. 44.

of the nineteenth century it was still possible for men like President Meigs of Georgia to satisfy their scientific curiosity by computing, on the basis of the law of falling bodies, the exact distance traversed by the rebellious angels in their descent to hell.[1] Nevertheless the views and findings of Buffon, Lamarck, Cuvier and other European naturalists, though perhaps not common property in American collegiate circles, were by no means unknown, and before the end of the period they came to constitute, along with Lyell and Darwin, quite a problem for the intellectual leaders in church and college. The gradual adoption of the evolutionary viewpoint by the leading universities, its consequent infiltration into the lesser institutions, the continued opposition to the new philosophy and its implications on the part of outstanding educators, like Mark Hopkins of Williams, the partial capitulation of others, like McCosh of Princeton, all of that is another story, with which the present work is not concerned.

Occasional references to the difficulty are found in the first half of the nineteenth century. Samuel Stanhope Smith's contributions to the problem of the origin of species were discussed in an earlier chapter.[2] Philip Lindsley found the idea of man's gradual emergence from lower animal forms to a civilized status "contradicted alike by reason, by revelation and by history."[3] The dependence of science upon revealed religion was Francis Wayland's theme at the dedication of a new library at Brown.[4] Professor Silliman of Yale had prepared an English geology text for use of his classes by prefacing it with an orthodox account of the creation and the deluge.[5] For this subterfuge he was taken to

[1] E. M. Coulter, *College Life in the Old South* (New York, 1928), p. 21.

[2] *Cf. supra*, ch. iv.

[3] *Inaugural Address* (Nashville, Tenn., 1825).

[4] F. and H. L. Wayland, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 320.

[5] Thomas Cooper, *On the Connection between Geology and the Pentateuch* (Letter to Silliman, Boston, 1833).

task by Thomas Cooper of South Carolina, one of the few openly liberal and anti-clerical forces in the colleges. Cooper, who in his own natural history course is said to have gone out of his way to challenge the genuineness of the Mosaic account, criticized Silliman for his unscientific attitude, for begging the question and for cutting the Gordian knot instead of untangling it.[1]

But then Cooper was a layman and virtually alone in his stand. The usual tendency was to reconcile, as far as possible, scientific discovery with biblical accounts, or else to minimize all scientific achievement as secondary to moral development and character growth. Timothy Dwight was a close observer of natural phenomena. In the course of his travels he had occasion to speculate on geological research and its significance so far as the veracity of Genesis was concerned. Admitting the propriety of scientific research, he at the same time scented dangers in the process. Adventurous minds, seeing only those instances favorable to their hypothesis, might build elaborate theories on too slender a basis of fact, with the result that later discoveries would tear down their beautiful structure. It was a mistake, therefore, to take such matters too seriously. Gradual changes in the earth's surface, indicated by such formations as Glen's Falls and Niagara, seemed plausible to Dwight, but, he reassured himself, they probably occurred, they must have occurred, within Scriptural time.[2]

Eliphalet Nott was not unaware of the importance of scientific development and its potential effect upon religious concepts. More than many others he kept pace with the times. His address at the fiftieth anniversary of his accession to the presidency of Union was thoroughly modern in thought, emphasizing as it did and, in the main, approving

[1] Cooper, *op. cit.*

[2] *Travels*, vol. ii, pp. 412, 462; vol. iv, p. 90.

the changes brought about during his long administration by the industrial revolution and the new science. He seemed to accept the possibility of evolution, but reconciled it with his faith: "No matter how far back the geologist may trace this world's unwritten history; back of that epoch, there still remains untraced the unwritten history of God's past eternity".[1]

But for Nott too, as for the others, science was incidental to morality, and wisdom the handmaid of virtue. The knowledge of God, not of chemistry or astronomy, is true wisdom. Science and religion should be mutually helpful, for the real purpose of both is to promote the ethical life. President Wylie of Indiana wrote a treatise on the uses of history, chief of which were the pointing of morals and the strengthening of character.[2] Knowledge for its own sake was a foreign concept to the reverend pedagogues. Merely to acquire information without putting it to some use was to waste one's life. Dwight warned the Yale students against throwing away their lives in this fashion by painting a dreadful picture of the academic scientist: "In his study he dwells; in his books he passes his life". The unlearned man is to him only a higher brute. He has not discovered that science is a means and not an end. He does not know that the humblest ploughman is a better member of society than he. He feels no obligation to promote human welfare, and his talents remain closeted in his mind. And the net result of all his feverish, purposeless activity: "After his death, his whole history may be written in this short epitaph: 'Here lies a Learned Man'."[3]

[1] C. Van Santvoord, *Memoirs of Eliphalet Nott* (New York, 1876), p. 327.

[2] *Indiana Historical Society Publications* (Indianapolis, 1897), vol. i, p. 81 *et seq.*

[3] *Sermons* (2 vols., New Haven, Conn., 1828), vol. i, p. 394.

In the main the presidents seem to have lived up to their ideals, for most of them took themselves and their mission in life very seriously. Systematic self-analysis and a deep sense of responsibility were manifested not only by those who inherited the proverbial New England conscience, but by Scottish Presbyterians, southern Methodists and Anglicans as well. If personal piety and a stern sense of duty on the part of their teachers had been the only thing needed to produce the desired ethical attitude in the undergraduates, then American colleges should have been highly successful training schools of character.

Individual differences modified the results of the uniformly religious and theological environment in which most of the clergymen-presidents had been reared. Some among them, with greater capacity for intense religious emotion, were caught up in revivals in their youth, and their conduct for the remainder of their lives showed the effects of this experience. Marsh of Vermont, Baldwin of Wabash, Holley of Transylvania all passed through such a crisis.[1] Charles G. Finney felt the Holy Ghost "like a wave of electricity, going through and through me."[2] The momentum supplied by that jolt carried him through an extremely busy career as revival preacher, traveling evangelist, and president of Oberlin College. Bishop Matthew Simpson, in charge of Indiana Asbury University, made a covenant with God to rise at four and retire at nine every day; to read one chapter of the Bible with notes or three without; to write down every duty that occurred to him; and to talk no politics.[3] Death had no terrors for Robert Bishop, two-fisted president of Miami

[1] J. Torrey, *The Remains of the Rev. James Marsh* (Boston, 1843), p. 25; Edwin F. Hatfield, *Patient Continuance in Well-Doing: A Memoir of Elihu W. Baldwin* (New York, 1843), p. 38; Caldwell, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

[2] *Memoirs of Rev. Charles G. Finney* (New York, 1876), p. 20.

[3] Crooks, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

University. Of considerable influence with his students, there was nothing soft or sentimental in his makeup. He especially enjoyed deathbed scenes and obituaries, and described his own father's death as follows: "At 10:20 a. m., my father returned from the harvest field with a pain in his bowels, and at 11:30 he died with glory on his lips".[1] Ezra Stiles, during a brief illness, spent the time of his enforced idleness reading Justin Martyr and several sermons on future misery.[2] Another executive with a full allotment of conscientious scruples was Ashbel Green of Princeton. During the Revolution he had taken a pot-shot at the British troops, and late in life this act still worried him, for he feared that it had in no way hastened the end of the war.[3] When suddenly informed of the death of a favorite son Green sat down to analyze his feelings and draw lessons from the event, in writing, under heads: first, second, third.[4] On a journey he was delayed several hours, and in order to minimize the waste of time he read sermons and the minutes of the last state assembly.[5] With all his conscientiousness however he failed to manage the boys at Princeton.

Motivated by a similar sense of responsibility, but somewhat more to the point, was Wayland's method of dealing with new students. "It is a most touching thing to me", he said, "to receive a new boy from his father, when I think what an influence there is in this place [Brown] for evil as well as for good. I do not know anything which affects me more. If I could ever receive a fresh boy from his father without emotion, I should think it high time to be off."[6]

[1] *Correspondence of Thomas Ebenezer Thomas* (1909), p. 43.

[2] *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles* (3 vols., New York, 1901), vol. iii, p. 98.

[3] Joseph H. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 353. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 238.

[6] F. and H. L. Wayland, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 260.

Nevertheless his tenderness did not blind him to the subterfuges of "peculiar", "sensitive" boys, whose parents demanded special treatment for their darlings. Such youngsters, said Wayland, are merely spoiled; they need the wrinkles ironed out, and four years of contact with normal boys is exactly the medicine they require.[1] No doting parents, no pious grandmother could secure special consideration for such weaklings.

More potent perhaps than the example of his personal conduct was the eloquence of the president. Since he was usually in charge of chapel worship, and was pressed into service, if of any merit at all as a speaker, on virtually every kind of public occasion, his opportunity at such times for shaping convictions and influencing conduct was greater than anywhere except in his classroom lectures. Marvelous tales have come down of the persuasive powers and overwhelming eloquence of this or that college head. Even when taken with the necessary grain of salt they create the impression that in the pulpit and classroom as well as in the legislative chambers there were giants in those days. Provost Mason of Columbia was a forceful speaker, especially when inveighing against Jefferson and his party. On a visit to England he preached before the London Mission Society, and as a result was held "almost an idol in London".[2] A southerner who in his youth had heard President Maxcy of South Carolina College, declared, when an old man, that he would willingly tramp two miles through the hottest sands to listen to another such discourse.[3] The friends and supporters of Indiana Asbury were very much disappointed in their new president,

[1] Wayland, *op. cit.*

[2] Jacob Van Vechten, *Memoirs of John M. Mason* (New York, 1856), p. 108.

[3] *The Literary Remains of the Rev. Jonathan Maxcy* (New York, 1844), p. 20.

Simpson, because of his youthful appearance. But all their doubts vanished when they heard him preach. Simpson always exhorted. On one occasion a student burst into class with the news that President Simpson was about to preach in the camp-grounds. The class broke up at once and stampeded to the camp-grounds. Recognizing the possibility of mixed motives on the part of the students, one is impressed by the confession of a professor of the college that if the ensuing sermon had lasted fifteen minutes longer, he would have died of excitement.[1] A sermon by Horace Holley in Boston is said to have provoked applause, something unusual in a New England church.[2] President Lord of Dartmouth was so fervent in prayer that an otherwise irreligious student remarked that he liked to hear the president say: "The Lord bless these young men, every one of them", for then he felt safe for the day.[3]

As an example of the flowery oratory of the early nineteenth century the following extract from a discourse of one of the ablest and most prolific of college heads is appended. It occurs in Eliphalet Nott's baccalaureate address of 1805, in which he balanced the advantages of philosophy and Christianity:

Philosophy can only heave a sigh, a longing sigh, after immortality. Eternity is to her an unknown vast, over which she soars on conjecture's trembling wing. Above, beneath, around, is an unfathomable void; and doubt, uncertainty, or despair is the result of all her inquiries.

Christianity, on the other hand, having furnished all necessary information concerning life, with firm and undaunted step crosses death's narrow isthmus, and boldly launches forth into

[1] Crooks, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

[2] Caldwell, *op. cit.*, p. 46, note.

[3] John K. Lord, *A History of Dartmouth College 1815-1909* (Concord, N. H., 1913), p. 329.

that dread futurity which borders on it. Her path is marked with glory. The once dark, dreary region brightens as she approaches it, and benignly smiles as she passes over it. Faith follows where she advances; till, reaching the summit of the everlasting hills, an unknown scene, in endless varieties of loveliness and beauty, presents itself, over which the ravished eye wanders, without a cloud to dim or a limit to obstruct its sight. In the midst of this scene, rendered luminous by the glory which covers it, the city, the palace, the throne of God appears. Trees of life surround it; rivers of salvation issue from beneath it. Before it, angels touch their harps of living melody, and saints, in sweet response, breathe forth their grateful songs.[1]

How much, after all, the average undergraduate was affected by this sort of thing is difficult to determine. The sermons were long, and not all were as vivid and picturesque as those of the president of Union. There was an abundance of fine-spun doctrical discussions, and long-drawn-out moralizing harangues. After submitting to daily chapel talks, to a long Sunday forenoon service, and then to an afternoon chapel sermon in which the president "closed" for more than three finely printed pages, was not the student more likely to come out of it all with negative results, in obedience to a theological law of diminishing returns?

The missionary and reform movements that swept the churches in the second quarter of the nineteenth century did not leave the colleges untouched. In fact some of them were the direct objects of missionary enterprise, others were centers of reform. Andover Seminary and Amherst College were the answer of the orthodox clergy of New England to the growing liberalism of Harvard. In soliciting funds for Illinois College its founders pictured it as not only an intellectual outpost to enlighten and elevate the frontier, but also as a nursery of evangelical Christianity, where Protest-

[1] *Counsels to Young Men* (New York, 1840), p. 22.

ant pastors would be trained and Protestant children saved from exposure "to the corrupting influences of Popery".[1]

Oberlin in Ohio was a center of reforms of all kinds. Anti-slave, anti-liquor, anti-tobacco, and anti-masonic movements all found this transplanted New England community of perfectionists hospitable soil.[2] Its presidents, Mahan and Finney, were both ardent crusaders, setting their face firmly against slavery, liquor and Masonry, which to them were outstanding social evils. Oberlin students were forbidden to drink, smoke, chew, snuff, and also to play cards, chess or checkers.[3] The Roman Catholic church was occasionally an object of attack. Denunciations of Romanism came from Beecher of Illinois, Wylie of Indiana, White of Wabash,[4] Blanchard of Knox, and Lindsley of Nashville. These men, especially Beecher and White, expressed alarm at the rapid spread of Catholicism in the West, and urged the Protestant churches to regard the Mississippi valley as a field for missionary endeavor and to people it with aggressive and denominationally conscious Protestants. To what extent utterances such as theirs were responsible for the rise of the Know-nothing and similar movements, is a matter of conjecture. No doubt they helped to mold public opinion.

One of the outstanding leaders in the early days of the temperance movement was President Nott. His exegetical researches into the exact connotation of the Hebrew words that the English Bible translates with wine, as well as his public temperance lectures, were widely used by the advocates

[1] Edward Beecher and Theron Baldwin, *An Appeal in Behalf of the Illinois College recently founded at Jacksonville, Ill.* (New York, 1831).

[2] D. L. Leonard, *The Story of Oberlin* (Boston, 1898), ch. xi, *passim.*

[3] *Laws and Regulations of the Oberlin Collegiate Institute* (Oberlin, O., 1840).

[4] Edward Beecher, *The Papal Conspiracy Exposed* (Boston, 1855). Wylie's *Uses of History* and White's *Baccalaureate Address* of 1842 both contain attacks upon the Church of Rome.

of total abstinence.[1] His lurid description of the habitual drinker who fell victim to spontaneous combustion was excellent campaign material for the prohibitionists. Nott himself implicitly believed the story, and insisted that deaths from this cause had become "so numerous and so incontrovertible, that I presume no person of information will now be found who will venture to call the reality of their existence in question."[2] The presence of wine at the wedding-feast of Cana he explained away by the suggestion: "[We will] leave the question whether the Savior of the world miraculously supplied on this occasion deleterious, exciting, intoxicating wine, or sober, moral, unintoxicating wine, to be passed on by the enlightened reason and conscience of others."[3]

In the second quarter of the century slavery came to be quite a bone of contention in the colleges, as everywhere else. Most commonly the presidents defended the prevailing opinion of their section, or class, or church.[4] Thus President Young of Centre College in Kentucky was co-author of a report issued by Presbyterians in that state, in which a supposedly feasible plan of gradual emancipation was put forth.[5] Basil Manly of Alabama was instrumental in organizing a southern Baptist church after the national body had split over the slavery issue.[6] Finney and Mahan of

[1] *Lectures on Temperance* (New York, 1857).

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 197.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 141.

[4] *Cf. supra*, ch. iv, on the views expressed in the moral philosophy course.

[5] John C. Young, *An Address to the Presbyterians of Kentucky, proposing a Plan for the Instruction and Emancipation of their Slaves* (Newburyport, Mass., 1836).

[6] Thomas M. Owen, "Dr. Basil Manly, the Founder of the Alabama Historical Society", *Alabama Historical Society Reprint No. 5* (Montgomery, Ala., 1904).

Oberlin have been referred to as prominent advocates of abolition.

But not all was harmony between the colleges and their constituents, or between faculties and students. Dissension was especially marked in the institutions under Presbyterian domination, where conservative and liberal elements vied for control. The latter group contained a considerable admixture of New England divines, while the former was largely made up of Scottish stock. This situation was the result of the Plan of Union which had been entered into in 1801 by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church and the Connecticut Association of Congregational churches. According to the terms of this agreement a church affiliated with either body might appoint a minister from the other and adopt the Presbyterian or the Congregational church polity as it saw fit.[1] Cooperation extended to the educational programs of the two, and a number of colleges had been erected by their joint efforts.[2] Prominent among these were Western Reserve, Miami, Illinois and Knox.

Though the plan had been adopted in good faith, fundamental differences soon developed between the two parties to the compact. The original Scottish faction, who had inherited their Presbyterianism, stressed doctrinal orthodoxy and correctness of form, but in social and moral questions tended to take on the color of their surroundings. The New England contingent, on the other hand, inclined to theological liberalism and made much of social reform. With one faction waxing hot about predestination and closed communion while the other was denouncing liquor and slavery, it was obvious that they were no longer speaking the same language,

[1] R. E. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

[2] *Cf. supra*, ch. i.

and when in 1837 the conservative old-school majority excommunicated the liberal new-school element it was only making facts legal.[1] But before long the New Englanders found even the new school too confining for their activities and accordingly, in 1852, they denounced the Plan of Union entirely and reorganized the Congregational association as a separate body of national extent.[2]

This long-drawn-out warfare did not leave the colleges untouched, in fact some of them became central arenas of conflict. As the breach between the factions widened, ownership of the college plants and endowments became a vexing problem, for each side had contributed toward their upbuilding and, naturally enough, claimed a share in the title, if not exclusive possession. In the Western Reserve of Ohio Oberlin, though in somewhat doubtful repute at first because of its perfectionist tendencies, eventually became the Congregationalist stronghold.[3] At Miami the two factions contended for the presidency. There was Robert Bishop, president from 1824-1840, who, though born in Scotland, felt that American Presbyterianism should slough off Scottish peculiarities and become more broadly national.[4] Far from being a liberal or a Unitarian—he had previously resigned a professorship at Transylvania because he found Horace Holley too worldly-minded[5] — Bishop nevertheless was charged by the conservatives with betraying the faith and opening the door to " wild-dancing Shakers, Arminians and

[1] Thompson, *op. cit.*, ch. ii.

[2] Williston Walker, *A History of the Congregational Churches in the United States* (New York, 1894), p. 317 and *passim.*

[3] *Ibid.*, ch. x.

[4] *Correspondence of Thomas Ebenezer Thomas* (1909), pp. 44, 45.

[5] W. L. Tobey and W. O. Thompson, *The Diamond Anniversary Volume, Miami University* (Hamilton, O., 1899), p. 87.

Pelagians." [1] Under the circumstances Bishop resigned. Faculty dissensions and student disorders also contributed to Bishop's difficulties, but his friends insisted that narrow sectarianism together with the pro-slavery element in the constituency had forced his removal.[2] George Junkin, Bishop's successor, was an active controversialist on the conservative side and opposed to all radical changes, social or educational. Quite consistently he fought both the abolition of slavery and the popularization of the curriculum. On one occasion he regaled the local presbytery with a ten-hour anti-abolition speech. Junkin's administration began auspiciously, but his predecessor Bishop retained many friends in college and town, and they made matters so uncomfortable for the new president that he left after three years.[3] His successor, McMaster, is described as opposed mildly to slavery, violently to the Mexican war. Besides he was a failure as a disciplinarian. After four years McMaster was succeeded by Wm. C. Anderson, a pious, polished gentleman who managed to avoid the pitfalls of theological controversy and stressed consecration and scholarship. Anderson was a huge success.[4]

Another storm center was Illinois College. Founded in 1829 by the Yale Band [5] in conjunction with a number of public-spirited citizens of Jacksonville, most of whom were Presbyterians,[6] its difficulties were aggravated by the geographical position of the college town, on the border where northern and southern emigration met. The president and faculty

[1] J. L. Wilson, *A Letter addressed to R. H. Bishop* (Cincinnati, 1835).

[2] T. E. Thomas, *loc. cit.*; Tobey and Thompson, *loc. cit.*

[3] Tobey and Thompson, *passim*. A. H. Upham, *Old Miami* (Hamilton, O., 1909), p. 44.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] A group of theological students at Yale who had dedicated themselves to the cause of Christian missions in the West.

[6] C. H. Rammelkamp, *Illinois College* (New Haven, 1928), ch. ii, *passim*.

were New Englanders, but most of the inhabitants were from the South. One of the former thus described the situation:

> In Illinois I met for the first time a divided Christian community, and was plunged without warning or preparation into a sea of sectarian rivalries, which was kept in constant agitation, not only by real differences of opinion, but by ill-judged discussions and unfortunate personalities among ambitious men.[1]

Such agitation was to be expected. Edward Beecher, the first president of Illinois college, stood guard over Lovejoy's printing press at Alton the night before the latter's murder, and was later instrumental in organizing a state anti-slavery society. Becoming convinced that immediate emancipation was the only proper course of action, "I felt it to be a matter of immense importance that measures should be taken, kindly, but thoroughly, to convince the slave states of the fact, and to urge the claims of duty."[2] Activities of this kind in a community of southern Presbyterians and Methodists were bound to react unfavorably upon the college, and for this reason Sturtevant, who succeeded Beecher in the presidency, tried to steer a middle course, and to avoid all positive commitments to any political or religious faction. Accused of maneuvering the college into the Congregational camp, his real purpose was to free it from all denominational control. Church and state both, he claimed, were "constituted for other ends than the management of literary institutions, and these primary ends for which they exist, will always be paramount in their proceedings and reduce all other interests which they may attempt to embrace

[1] Sturtevant, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

[2] *Narrative of the Riots at Alton* (Alton, Ill., 1838).

and take care of, to a subordinate position." [1] At the same time he insisted on freedom of expression for himself and the faculty, both in political and religious questions. Fortunately for him the trustees refused to entertain all charges of heresy and suggestions for direct church control, and retained him in office.[2]

The Knox College controversy revolved about the person of its second president, Jonathan Blanchard. Blanchard, a typical reformer, was born in Vermont.[3] Even before his conversion he had been "accounted a moral youth" and had given up dancing and cards. As a lad he had smashed a jug of rum in his father's cellar, and his first publication was a temperance speech. Entering the Presbyterian pulpit after his graduation from Middlebury, he was for a number of years pastor at Cincinnati. An earnest abolitionist, he engaged in several public debates on the question. In 1843 he went to London, where he was chosen American vice-president of the World's Anti-Slavery Convention. Upon his return he also found time to lecture on the wrongs of Ireland. As president of Knox College he fought—and was fought by—the liquor interests, the pro-slavery element, and the Masons.[4] In Blanchard's opinion college was not a place to study social problems objectively in order to form reasoned and independent judgments, but rather a seminary of propaganda, whose faculty

[1] From an article in the *New Englander*, quoted in Rammelkamp, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

[2] Rammelkamp, p. 1886; ch. vi, *passim.*

[3] The facts are taken from Blanchard's autobiographical sketch: "My life Work", in his *Sermons and Addresses* (Chicago, 1892).

[4] He complained that students got their first liquor in a drug store operated by a Mason; that a colleague in the faculty served wine at table; that two sons of this colleague had joined a lodge; and that the father of the same man was willing to have slaveholders on the board of a theological seminary which he was trying to found. *Ibid.*

ought to lead the students, both by precept and example, to take the simple ground of opposiiton to prevailing sins, which truth demands, and to do their utmost, by prayer and instruction, to infuse into the youth a zeal for reformation which will enable them to breast the after opposition which they will meet from the world. We want a martyr age of Colleges and Seminaries to send forth a host of young men at the sound of whose goings the whole land shall tremble—men who will not rest while one way or practice in the community violates the law of God—who will toil for Christ as assiduously as the minions of Popery drudge for the man of Sin; and who will withstand established evils meekly, openly and boldly, as Luther withstood his accusers at the Diet of Worms.[1]

When the Presbyterian element in the Knox constituency objected to the extreme views of the president, the Congregational group retorted that their Presbyterian brethren had originally held the same views, but had since grown lax in their reforming zeal and at the same time more narrowly sectarian. It was also urged that the Presbyterians were deliberately trying to gain full control of the college, whereas most of the original contributions toward the enterprise had come from Congregational sources.[2] Meanwhile Blanchard had resigned, having been requested to do so, along with his chief opponent in the faculty, by an eleven-to-ten vote of the trustees.[3] The new president, Curtis, sounded a different note. He would attend strictly to his academic duties, teach objective facts, and avoid controversy.[4]

[1] Speech quoted in *Rights of the Congregationalists in Knox College* (Chicago, 1859).

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *The Diary of Orville Hickman Browning* (2 vols., first is numbered vol. 20 of the *Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library*), pp. 291, 297, 304, 323.

[4] Inaugural address in *Rights of the Congregationalists.* For the Presbyterian side of the controversy *cf.* J. W. Bailey, *Knox College, by*

Princeton in this period was only lukewarm toward radical reforms, and preached caution and conciliation. In fact the Princeton faculty was accused by some of the reform element in the Presbyterian church, though apparently without cause, of selling out to the slave interests. On the temperance question too conservative voices sounded from Princeton. President McLean wrote an exhaustive criticism of extreme temperance advocates in which he contended that their scriptural basis was shaky, their facts inaccurate, and their arguments generally unsound.[1]

Another northern doubter, a New Englander who was not to be stampeded by the universal abolition hysteria, was President Lord of Dartmouth. Drawn into an extended controversy with some of his brethren over the slavery issue, he maintained in several public letters that slavery was a divinely ordained institution, useful perhaps for reformatory purposes. He held no brief, so he said, for any abuses incident to any one particular form of slavery, but was speaking of the institution as such. With considerable skill and sharp dialectic he defended his position, accusing his opponents of raising anti-scriptural contentions, of being carried away with sentiment, and of pushing the nation on to civil war by the ceaseless din of their controversy.[2]

Not unimportant was the part played by the presidents in determining the relation between church colleges and the public authorities, as well as between state-controlled and

whom founded and endowed. A general account is Martha F. Webster, *Seventy-five Significant Years, The Story of Knox College* (Galesburg, Ill., 1912).

[1] John McLean, *An Examination of the Essays Bacchus and Anti-Bacchus* (Princeton, 1841).

On Princeton's attitude toward slavery, *cf.* R. E. Thompson, *op. cit.*

[2] A Northern Presbyter, *A Letter of Inquiry to Ministers of the Gospel of All Denominations on Slavery* (Boston, 1854). A second letter followed in 1855.

privately-owned institutions. As was pointed out in an earlier chapter, the line of distinction between public and private schools was sometimes hazy.[1] This condition in turn reflected the general indefiniteness in the relations of church and state in some of the American commonwealths. In Virginia the clear-cut separation provided for in Jefferson's statute of 1785 made possible the erection of the non-denominational university forty years later. Indicative of the sentiment of the non-conforming churches during the Revolution is a memorial of the presbytery of Hanover to the legislature in 1776, in which, among other things, the conviction is expressed that religion is altogether personal, that it cannot and ought not to be resigned to the will of society at large, and much less to the legislature.[2] Among the members of this conference were a future president of Hampden-Sidney and one of Eastern Tennessee. The biographer of President Witherspoon of Princeton asserts that this resolution betrays the influence of the latter and is quite in his manner of thought.[3] The Presbyterians did not always take such a decided stand.

In the southern states the tendency was to establish one state-owned or state-supported college, from which sectarian instruction was to be carefully excluded. This did not however mean an irreligious or even a non-Protestant school. The cultivation of a positive Christian spirit was usually taken for granted, and even the non-sectarian character, as the recital below of Thomas Cooper's troubles will show, was maintained with difficulty.

Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York repeatedly subsidized private colleges of Protestant, if not actually sectarian leanings, and the presidents of such institutions were not in-

[1] *Cf. supra*, p. 37.

[2] V. L. Collins, *President Witherspoon*, vol. ii, p. 226.

[3] *Ibid.*

frequently found lobbying for legislative aid.[1] In Connecticut and Massachusetts, where the establishments were not entirely abolished until 1818 and 1833 respectively, the colleges, especially Yale and Harvard, remained quasi-public institutions.[2] Timothy Dwight approved of an arrangement which made support of public worship compulsory and whereby the schools, high and low, were essentially church schools, for he believed that experience, in Connecticut at least, had stamped it a success.[3] A student's view of the religious and political convictions of the Yale faculty in Dwight's day is expressed in a letter of an undergraduate: "The President and Professors are perfectly united in their sentiments, with regard to Politics and Religion. These are very nearly the same with those of Calvin and Washington".[4]

In other denominations, too, a working agreement between the government and the church was considered desirable. Jasper Adams, while president of Charleston College in South Carolina, preached to the Protestant Episcopal Convention in 1833 on the relation of Christianity to civil government in the United States.[5] In this sermon Adams

[1] Smith of Princeton, Nisbet of Dickinson, Mason of Columbia, and especially Nott of Union, agitated and petitioned for such subsidies.

[2] The Massachusetts legislature, for example, in 1834 made ministers of denominations other than the Congregational eligible for membership on the Harvard Board of Overseers, and by another act, in 1865, placed their election in the hands of the alumni. "History and Customs of Harvard University," in *Universities and their Sons* (J. L. Chamberlain, ed., 5 vols., Boston, 1898), vol. i, pp. 88, 90.

In the case of Yale, the six state senators who had been members of the corporation since 1792, were in 1871 replaced by six alumni. "History of Yale University", *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 273.

[3] *Travels*, preface.

[4] Herbert B. Adams, *The Life and Writings of Jared Sparks* (2 vols., Boston, 1893), vol. i, p. 45.

[5] *The Relation of Christianity to Civil Government in the United States* (Charleston, S. C., 1833).

argued, like Dwight, that religious liberty did not mean that Christianity had no connection whatever with government, but only that no one form of Christianity was to be privileged. All the state governments, he claimed, recognized the religion by prescribing oaths, Sabbath observance and the like. "The people of the United States have retained the Christian religion as the foundation of their civil, legal, and political institutions".[1] Congress must also recognize this, for, argued Adams, the first amendment of the federal constitution means that congress has no power to change or injure the existing religious observances of the majority, but must legislate in conformity with Christian principles and usages.

Where such views prevailed it was but natural that officials of private or denominational colleges should appeal to the government or general public for support, or that the views and desires of the dominant sect should determine the policies of the nominally public or independent college in its midst. Significant in this connection is the attempt to exercise such control ascribed to a Congregational association in Vermont:

> The Calvinistic sentiments never will prevail till the colleges are under our influence. . . . We ought to have a president and instructors who have the address to instill the Calvinistic sentiments without the students being sensible of it, then nine out of ten will support the Calvinistic doctrines . . . . they will go out into the world and have their influence in society—in this way we can get a better support without any law than we ever had with it. And besides, when once our colleges are under our influence, it will establish our sentiments and influence so that we can manage the civil government as we please.[2]

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 12.

[2] Quoted in R. and J. Peter, *Transylvania University* (Louisville, Ky., 1896), p. 130.

But when no one body held a decided majority—and this was the case nearly everywhere outside of New England—friction was likely to result. It might grow out of an attempt of the clerical patrons of a sectarian institution to limit expressions of opinion by the president and faculty, or to force a narrowing curriculum upon them; it might consist in the opposition of bodies of clergymen to the character and conduct of a state institution in their midst; and it might take the form of intense and sometimes unscrupulous competition among church schools, or between these and public establishments. Samuel Stanhope Smith, genial and broadminded president of Princeton, found himself hampered by leading Presbyterian divines who criticized him for supporting an enlarged science course—Smith had established a chair of chemistry in 1795—and who proposed to erect a theological seminary in connection with the college as a corrective to his rather liberal courses in moral philosophy and religion. When the seminary began operations, Smith resigned.[1] The college, however, managed to retain its corporate identity, largely through the efforts of a later president, McLean, who held that a college was much better off under private trustees than under synodical ownership. For purity of doctrine could be secured by careful selection of the trustees, the standard of achievement was likely to be higher, and there was far less danger of having the administration corrupted by factions and political machinations.[2]

President Thornwell of South Carolina College, himself a prominent clergyman, found it necessary, in view of the rapid multiplication of sectarian colleges in the state, to write an open letter to the governor suggesting more wholehearted

[1] V. L. Collins, *Princeton*, p. 114 *et seq.*

[2] *Letters on the True Relation of Church and State to Schools and Colleges* (Princeton, 1853).

support of the state's own college.[1] For this institution, he argued, while undenominational, was not anti-Christian. "A [state] College knows nothing of denominations . . . . but it does not follow that a College must be necessarily atheistic or unchristian".[2] The influence of religion is indispensable for molding character; but this can best be achieved, so Thornwell thinks, not through a multitude of small sectarian establishments with little money and low standards, but through the joint support of the state college on the part of all the sects. The pressure of public opinion will thus insure the Christian character.[3]

Conflicts of a similar nature occurred elsewhere. In Indiana the Protestant churches, after vainly trying to control the state university, built colleges of their own, the Presbyterians founding Hanover, the Baptists Franklin, and the Methodists Indiana Asbury.[4] The Georgia colleges, Mercer, Emory, Oglethorpe, grew out of a similar situation.[5] Henry P. Tappan's far-reaching innovations at the University of Michigan were looked upon with disfavor by the Methodists of the state, who attacked the morals of the university. They were not successful at the time in discrediting Tappan, but the latter continued to encounter difficulties of one kind or another, until in 1863 he resigned.[6] It was the boast of the University of Mississippi that its student body was more orderly and better behaved than that of a rival Presbyterian

[1] *Letter to Governor Manning on Public Instruction in South Carolina* (1853; republished, Charleston, S. C., 1885).

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Logan Esarey, *A History of Indiana From its Exploration to 1850* (Indianapolis, 1915), p. 291 *et seq.*

[5] Coulter, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

[6] E. M. Farrand, *History of the University of Michigan* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1885), p. 140.

college which emphasized Christian environment.[1] When Kenyon College in Ohio was separated from the seminary of which it had originally been a subdivision and granted an independent existence, Major D. B. Douglass, a civil engineer from West Point, was put in charge. Douglass improved the buildings and grounds, raised the standards, and won the confidence of the students to such an extent that Rutherford B. Hayes could say in his valedictory address in 1842: "We have met you on terms of familiarity and confidence not often accorded to the pupil by his instructor." Nevertheless differences arose between Douglass and Bishop McIlvaine, who had been president of the whole institution and still claimed final jurisdiction in all its departments. Charges and countercharges were made, until the situation became impossible and Douglass was asked to resign.[2]

A clash of denominational interests likewise accounts for the fate of Horace Holley at Transylvania. This was a semi-sectarian, semi-public institution which had been controlled by the Presbyterians, but was slipping from their grasp. The open and candid doctrinal liberalism of Holley was galling to members of that sect. His somewhat superior attitude, his determination to "look down upon the competition of [sectarian] parties" from a "more pure and elastic atmosphere"[3] did not increase his popularity in orthodox circles. Holley's educational achievements and his success in making Transylvania the foremost cultural center in the west, with a total enrollment in 1826 of 418 students, weighed nothing in the balance against his socinianism,

[1] John Fulton, *Memoirs of Frederick A. P. Barnard* (N. Y., 1896), p. 203.

[2] Biographical sketch in the *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*. For Douglass' side of the case *cf.* his *Statement of Facts and Circumstances connected with the removal of the Author from the presidency of Kenyon College* (1844).

[3] Letter to his wife, in R. and J. Peter, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

pelagianism, and want of faith in a personal devil. He had disturbed the popular faith by not adhering to "the religion of the state".[1] When it further became increasingly apparent that Holley rather enjoyed formal dinners and witty conversation, that he tolerated cards, dancing and horse-racing, the case against him was complete.[2] For nine years he stood up against the fire of criticism and then resigned, utterly disappointed.

At about the same time Philip Lindsley was having his troubles in the neighboring state of Tennessee. Lindsley's pleas for a complete state-supported university in Nashville and for higher qualities of intellectual achievement have been related elsewhere, as well as his protests against small unstandardized church colleges with their short cuts to learning.[3] In his attempt to reach his goal he seems to have been hampered chiefly by two classes in the community: lawyers and preachers. Repeatedly he inveighed against the shady practices of the former and the unsavory proselyting methods of the latter. Too many of the lawyers were parasites, preying on the ignorance of their neighbors. The only remedy was wide diffusion of knowledge, for "they will abound and flourish just in proportion to the general ignorance and degradation of the masses of the people".[4] As for the preachers who were thwarting his desires to achieve something solid in the way of scientific education, their machinations were comparable to those of medieval priestcraft, the acme, to his Protestant mind, of narrowness and bigotry. "Neither one nor the other [lawyers or preachers] would be the worse for a thorough scientific education".[5] Though

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 144.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 122.

[3] *Cf. supra*, pp. 104, 164.

[4] *Commencement Address* of 1829.

[5] *Ibid.*

a clergyman himself, he did not mince words in attacking his opponents, nor did he hesitate to employ satire and invective in his struggle against the obscurantism that he felt was blinding so many of his brethren. He deplored the mushroom growth of small denominational colleges, that claimed to be non-sectarian and by false pretenses secured charters "for something called a college".[1] To the often-voiced opinion that inspiration and consecration were after all more important than accurate knowledge and scientific habits of mind, he retorted: "If people choose to have inspired men for their spiritual guides, the less of human science with which they may chance to be encumbered, the better—at least, the more apparent and striking will be the evidence of their inspiration." [2]

One of the bitterest conflicts was that between Thomas Cooper, freethinker, and the forces of orthodoxy in South Carolina. Cooper has been elected president of the state college in 1821 by the margin of one vote. Supported largely by deists and religious liberals, as well as by the state-right faction, whose cause he championed, Cooper had to face the growing opposition of conservative Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists, who had benefited by the widespread revivals of the first decade of the century and were increasing in numbers and fervor. Though he outwardly conformed by paying tribute in his inaugural address to the value of religion and by attending church every Sunday, Cooper's public utterances, flowing as they did from a fierce conviction of the sacredness of free speech, led him into endless difficulties. He roused the ire of the clergy by his rejection of sectarian beliefs and by his critical examination of the Bible, as exemplified in his class lectures on the Pentateuch. Of these latter a student remarked that they were

[1] *Commencement Address* of 1829.

[2] *Ibid. Cf. Commencement Address* of 1831.

quite uncalled for, as they did not at all fit into the course in which they occurred. It seemed astonishing to him that "a country as full of Presbyterianism and bigotry as that was at that time" should have tolerated such a state of affairs.[1]

At a matter of fact Cooper's views and actions were not tolerated. He conducted his office under a constant fire of criticism. "I live here the life of a Toad under a harrow",[2] he wrote to a friend in 1829. Three years later, to the same friend, he complained:

> You have heard, I suppose, that the battle rages furiously between the Church militant and your humble servant, even to extermination. . . . I am not yet conquered, and expect yet to bivouac on the field of Battle. I have no objection to a moral governor of the universe, but how came he in that character to create the Priesthood? . . . Can you tell me for what good purpose that man of the milk of human kindness, John Calvin, was ordered into the world, the counterpart of Ignatius Loyola? Hands off! that's my trick if you please, as the devil said of the dead presbyterian! Thank heaven, when I depart from these gentry in this world, there is no chance of our meeting again in another. . . . [3]

He was convinced that the opposition to him was merely a mask to cover a concerted attempt to subject the college to denominational control. To Jefferson he accordingly wrote:

> Equally decided and persevering is the attempt of the same sect to acquire the command over every seminary of education, and finally to establish, in favour of the Presbyterians, a Church establishment. Of these designs on the part of that sect I am

[1] J. Marion Sims, *The Story of My Life* (New York, 1894), p. 83.

[2] "Letters of Dr. Thomas Cooper, 1825-1832", in *American Historical Review*, vol. vi, no. 4.

[3] *Ibid.*

as fully persuaded as I am of my own existence; and what is worse, I greatly fear they will succeed.[1]

Cooper was at last directly charged with incompetence, and though he was acquitted after a brilliant, if not always logical, defense, his position had by this time become so uncomfortable that he resigned the presidency a year later, in 1833, and shortly afterwards severed all connections with the college.[2]

Between the extremes of crusaders and controversialists on the one hand, and on the other of the independent president who aggressively resented clerical intrusion into his field, there was the large body of those who desired peace at any price. Theological peace, that is; for chronic religious dissension, besides being inimical to scholarly pursuits, was inconsistent with the ideal of Christian training through the development of all mental and moral faculties. For the sake of their calling and educational ideals many presidents preferred to avoid all such entanglements. Those who did were often the most successful leaders and executives. Jonathan Maxcy's views on assuming the presidency of Brown are reflected in the following extract from his address commemorating the death of his predecessor, Manning:

The only thing essential to Christian union is love, or benevolent affection. It is, therefore, with me, a fixed principle to censure no man except for immorality. A diversity of religious opinions, in a state so imperfect, obscure, and sinful as the present, is to be expected. An entire coincidence in sentiment, even in important doctrines, is by no means essential to Christian society, or the attainment of eternal felicity. How many are there, who appear to have been subjects of regeneration, who have scarcely an entire comprehensive view of one doctrine of the Bible?

[1] Quoted in Dumas Malone, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

[2] *Ibid., passim.*. *Cf.* E. L. Green, *A History of the University of South Carolina* (Columbia, S. C., 1916), *passim.*

Will the gates of paradise be barred against these because they did not possess the penetrating sagacity of an Edwards or a Hopkins? Or shall these great theological champions engross heaven, and shout hallelujahs from its walls, while a Priestly, a Price, and a Winchester, merely for a difference in opinion, though preeminent in virtue, must sink into the regions of darkness and pain? [1]

Apparently rendered cautious by the opposition provoked by these views, Maxcy in later sermons returned to a more orthodox Calvinism, whether from conviction or expediency, it is hard to determine.[2] His successor at Brown, Asa Messer, managed to keep the institution on an even keel for twenty-two years. Possessing no outstanding qualities of leadership or organization, Messer's sedulous avoidance of religious controversy, which he abhorred, may have been at least a negative factor in securing his long continuance in office. Alternately labeled a Baptist and a Unitarian, he finally succumbed to anonymous attacks upon his orthodoxy, which contributed to undermine his influence over faculty and students and to end his career.[3]

Miami University, whose fortunes had declined under an alternating succession of social reformers and theological controversialists, was revived both in numbers and prestige when the presidency was entrusted to William C. Anderson, a gentleman of high ideals and magnetic personality, who stressed Christian unity and Christian life, and avoided controversy.[4] The fame of Mark Hopkins was due in no small measure to his skill in harmonizing philosophy and Christianity, and instilling in his students a "cheerful Calvinism".[5]

[1] *Literary Remains*, p. 151.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 53, 66.

[3] W. C. Bronson, *The History of Brown University* (Providence, R. I., 1914), p. 186 *et seq.* *Cf.* the biographical sketch in Sprague's *Annals*.

[4] Tobey and Thompson, *op. cit., passim.*

[5] Franklin Carter, *Mark Hopkins* (Boston, 1892), p. 322.

Andrew Wylie kept the University of Indiana alive by steering a middle course between the pretensions of the various sects. Meanwhile he stressed the educational needs of the state and the ability of the university to supply them.[1]

Francis Wayland hoped for a union of all Christian churches and deplored the existing differences " not so much respecting what the Bible teaches, as about their own glosses and deductions from it ".[2] He classified himself as a modern Calvinist, but admitted that he had never read Calvin's works, nor anything on controversial theology.[3] To a student who was completely muddled by reading Paley, Chalmers and Butler, he gave the advice to forget theology and take an all-day walk.[4] Wayland's views coincided with those of his great teacher, Nott. The latter also held " the old-fashioned Puritan and Presbyterian theology ", not polemically but sincerely.[5] One who often heard him preach characterized him as neither a Calvinist nor a Lutheran.[6] He declined an offer from Boston in 1810 partly to avoid the impending theological warfare there, for which he confessed he had no inclination.[7] He advised a young candidate for the ministry never to argue with a Baptist or an Episcopalian, for the former had more water and the latter more form, and they would always beat him.[8]

Nott, Wayland, Maxcy, Wylie, Hopkins—here were outstanding leaders in their calling. Dwight may be added to

[1] " Historical Sketch " in *Indiana University 1820-1904* (Bloomington, Ind., 1904).

[2] Wayland, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 419.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 63.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 64.

[5] Van Santvoord, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 63.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 124.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 247.

their number, for even he attacked chiefly the anti-Christian forces, and was little interested in inter-denominational bickering. Apologetics was his field, not polemics. Aside from the personal qualities of these men, did their decision to refrain from theological controversy increase their usefulness? Were the real educators among college presidents "practical Christians"? No generalization is perhaps warranted, but it would seem that a college executive whose chief interest remained theological was apt to fail or at any rate to achieve no more than mediocre success. Those men, on the other hand, who devoted their time to educational problems primarily and to theology only incidentally, were the great presidents.

CONCLUSION

The Passing of the Old-Time College President

In the development of higher education in the United States the first half of the nineteenth century can be properly characterized as the era of the college. Maintaining its ascendancy to the Civil War and beyond, the college then began to decline in relative importance until it was eventually overshadowed by the university. Chief among the factors contributing to this change was the industrial revolution. As a result of this the older agricultural economy of the nation was giving way before the onslaught of organized industry, and commensurate changes in the realm of thought were being achieved at the same time through the rise of the new science. Under such conditions it was inevitable that the colleges would be called upon to revise their aims and modernize their methods. The old course of Latin and Greek, mathematics and rhetoric, ethics and metaphysics, was felt to be inadequate; for it no longer seemed to fit the facts. Accordingly the demands upon the colleges to expand and keep pace with industrial and scientific progress grew more aad more insistent. The answer to these demands was the university.

The beginnings of the university movement go back to the early nineteenth century. Professional courses were then being given at Columbia and at Pennsylvania. Harvard and Yale, by establishing professional schools from time to time, were early aspiring to university dimensions. A divinity school, a medical school and a law school were added at Harvard before 1829, during Kirkland's administration. The

Yale medical school goes back to 1813; divinity and law came in 1822 and 1843 respectively, under Day. But the corresponding enlargement of the college and the welding of all these various units into a harmonious whole did not occur at either of these schools until after the Civil War. The significance of the University of Virginia was discussed in an earlier chapter. A number of other institutions before 1850 called themselves universities, but the changes did not go beyond that of the title. In methods and achievements they remained under-graduate colleges.

The establishment of the university as a permanent feature of American higher education is associated with the names of a number of prominent presidents that arose soon after the middle of the century. The first was Philip Tappan, who came to Michigan in 1852 and there laid the foundation of an establishment after the Prussian model, a university both in form and spirit. In 1866 F. A. P. Barnard took charge at Columbia and began to speed up the process that was to transform that college into Columbia University. The end of the same decade witnessed the accession of White at Cornell, Stillé at Pennsylvania, McCosh at Princeton, and, above all, Eliot at Harvard. All of these brought about momentous changes in their respective institutions. In 1875 Johns Hopkins opened its doors under the leadership of Daniel Coit Gilman. The state university, furthermore, was being generally established in the states west of the Alleghenies, and its scope was being enlarged by the provisions of the Morill Act of 1862, compliance with whose terms secured to the university increased facilities for technical and vocational training.

As a result of these far-reaching developments the office of the college president was metamorphosed, for the new system meant more students, larger facilities, a greater range of subjects in the curriculum, new methods of teaching and study-

ing, and more complex administrative problems. The president was now confronted with a situation that required talents and training far different from those that had sufficed in the past. Executive capacity was needed, above all, to unify and balance the ever widening and ramifying branches of the university. Little time remained for attending to boarding-school discipline, for teaching, or preaching. All this work had to be divided and redistributed. Supervision of the students, so far as it was still necessary or possible, fell to the dean. Classroom instruction, so prominent a feature of the old president's work, tended to become exclusively a function of the several departments of instruction and to be taken over by specialists. The moral philosophy course began to disintegrate into its component parts. Philosophy, psychology, economics and political science each claimed its share until little was left of the old omnibus course. There remained the administrative functions, and these increased to such an extent that virtually no time remained for anything else. The president's office, through this process of evolution, thus came to be something quite different. Financial acumen and organizing ability came to rate higher than classroom skill or pulpit oratory. It was still essential that the president be a gentleman, and scholarship too was highly desirable; but above all he must make the organization function as a harmonious whole, build up an *esprit de corps* and maintain the morale of the university. In short, the teacher and patriarch was giving way to the business executive.

The old time college president has had his day, but he has not ceased to be. The evolution described in the foregoing paragraphs did not proceed everywhere with the same speed or to the same degree. The widespread imitation of university methods and policies has not yet resulted in the extinction of the small college. Though no longer occupying the center of the stage, it continues to exist. And at its head

one may still find the president who teaches fundamentals, supervises the life of the institution, and personally ministers to the intellectual and spiritual well-being of the individual student. Wherever such presidents function intelligently, responsive to new stimuli and resentful of outworn traditions, they continue to render what was perhaps the old time college president's greatest service: education by personal contact.

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